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CHRONICLES OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

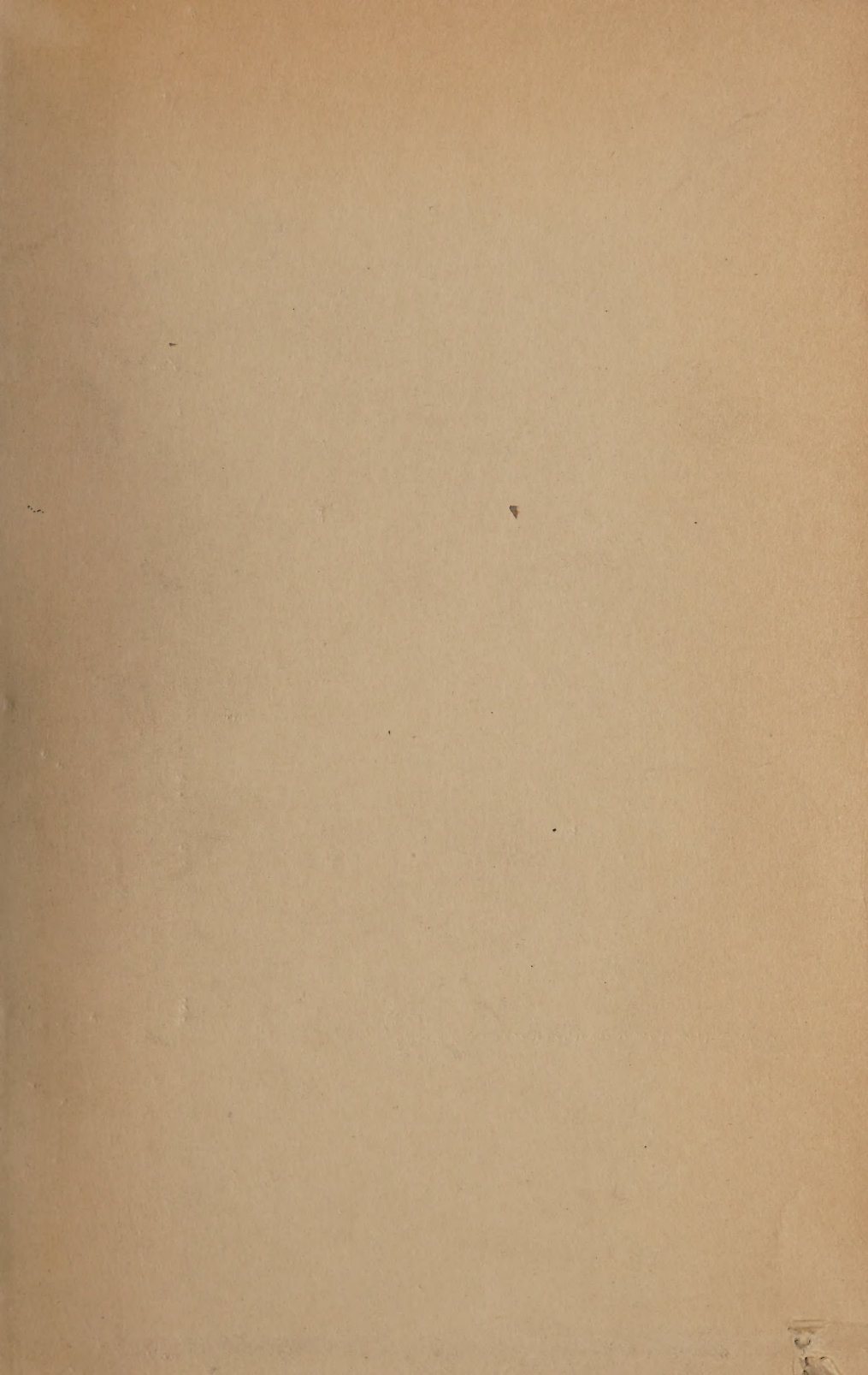
By Maud Wyndham



THESE extraordinary chronicles are primarily concerned with the members of the Lyttelton family, of which Sir Thomas was for many years the head. With him and his friends and immediate family the history of the times is closely interwoven. These times were marked by wars, political upheavals, expansion of empire, the making and destruction of certain prime ministers. Associated with these days is a long list of great literary names.

“Poorly equipped in worldly goods, most of the Lytteltons were forced to earn their living, which took them into wider spheres than perhaps their natural proclivities would have led them; and they had powerful connections through whom they rose higher in those spheres than they might have done by their abilities alone. Thus they came into touch with many great men of their time and with many of the great events; their correspondence tells of these, and depicts as well the everyday life of ordinary people. These chronicles give, therefore, a picture of the life of those days from many points of view.”

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CHRONICLES OF
THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

CHRONICLES OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

*Founded on the Correspondence of
Sir Thomas Lyttelton and his Family*

BY
MAUD WYNDHAM

Vol. II

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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CHAPTER I

BILLY LYTTTELTON STARTS IN LIFE. DEATH OF SIR THOMAS

IN the summer of 1748 Dame Christian Lyttelton ended her gentle, shadowy existence; "Beloved and Mourned," says her epitaph, "by her Family, by her Neighbours, and by the poor." In the family letters she is always spoken of with affection, on the rare occasions when she is mentioned at all. "Nobody mentions my Lady," complained Richard from Flanders. "But I know she prays for me; I wish she may long do so."

All her sons were by now settled in their careers, except Billy, the youngest, aged twenty-three. He was educated at Eton and Oxford, and afterwards went abroad with Henry Thrale.¹ Like his brother Charles, Billy first chose the Bar as a profession, and, like him, soon wished to leave it. His ambition turned to Parliament; with friends and relations in the Government, his prospects there were brighter than he could hope for as a lawyer. In January 1748 he wrote to his father from Pump Court, using the most forcible arguments he could think of in favour of giving up his profession.

¹ Lord Cobham had married Miss Halsey, a wealthy brewer's only child. As it was then unheard of for a peer to own a brewery, it was sold to Henry Thrale's father, who had started life as an apprentice in the business. Henry Thrale is best known as the husband of Hester Thrale, afterwards Mrs. Piozzi, and friend of Dr. Johnson. Mrs. Piozzi says that her husband's father paid young Lyttelton's expenses on this tour, Billy contributing the social status.

I can never forget the conclusion of your last letter, in which you tell me that nothing can give you more satisfaction when you leave the world, than the prospect of my being well established in it. 'Twas the desire I had of being able to afford you that satisfaction which induced me to take the step I did. And I don't believe Mr. Ingram (however he might think seniority detrimental in particular cases) denied the truth of my assertion that, without uncommon good fortune, no man was ever trusted with business of any importance till he had been six or seven years at the Bar; and if you will consider it in that light, Sir, the question is totally different. 'Tis not whether I am now qualified to practice the Law, but whether I may presume that I shall, if ever, be so when I am thirty years old; and whether in any profession that is not a time of life when a man would wish to begin to taste the sweets of it, from many considerations. This I hope, Sir, you will think, not a specious but a solid argument.

William Pitt was the friend most responsible for his namesake's change of profession. With fervid eloquence he did his utmost to convince Sir Thomas that it was best for Billy to give up the Bar. Sir Thomas finally gave his consent, not, it is probable, without a rueful reflection on the two legal educations he had paid for in vain, whereupon Pitt wrote to him in terms of rapturous gratitude :

June 8, 1748.—I may venture to assure you that I feel from my heart the great honour you do me in the value you are pleased to set upon my wishes for Billy. He certainly deserves every sort of regard, and it is a great pleasure to me to have an occasion to talk to you of a son you love so tenderly, and who yet at the same time owes none of the opinion and expectations you have of him to that laudable weakness called paternal partiality. I have long seen in his mind the promise of very particular talents for the business

of the world, accompanied with a sound judgement; and particularly have always marked and loved in him the strong seeds of honour and virtue in his heart. All these, Sir Thomas, are now ripening, or rather ripened for action, and it would be ten thousand pities should they be stifled, for a long time at least, and perhaps entirely lost, in the inglorious and unprofitable labours of Westminster Hall.

I most heartily wish you joy of an opportunity of bringing him forward into light, which is all he wants. The rest he will, I make no doubt, do for himself. Nothing can be kinder and more flattering to me than your thinking of putting him under, as you are pleased to call it, my protection. If I can be of any little use to him at his beginning in our Parliamentary warfare, be assured it will be a most sensible pleasure to me. Should he on any occasion want direction, he will always find the surest and best in his brother Lyttelton. The director and pupil are most worthy of each other, and you, dear Sir Thomas, of the comfort of both.

The opportunity for bringing William forward was an expected vacancy at Bewdley, a neighbouring borough in the family interest. In the meantime Pitt planned for him a sojourn in Germany with his friend Henry Legge, then Special Envoy to the Court of Berlin, William to be unofficial secretary, as his brother had been with Poyntz. Billy on June 14 wrote that this step had been "resolved on by Mr. Pitt and my brother George," that he was to take letters of introduction to Legge, and that the effect of these missives "we hope will be an invitation into his house if he has room for me." Not only was Billy to go, but Pitt decided he should start without waiting for an answer from the unhappy Envoy. The less adventurous brothers were swept along by the mighty genius who threw into Billy's arrangements all the energy and vision that ten years later were to change the history of the world.

As to his Parliamentary plan, Billy wrote that his brother told him to say that "Mr. Pitt not only continued in the same sentiments, but would scarce hear any objection that could tend to hinder or delay the execution of it." Mr. Pelham also considered it would be "highly proper and advantageous for me to pursue it," which no doubt Sir Thomas felt added some ballast to the proceedings. His son ended by expressing his "deep sense of the great affection which you and the rest of my friends, particularly you, my brother Lyttelton, and Mr. Pitt, have shewn me upon this occasion."

He enclosed for his father's approval the very pompous letter of introduction he was to be armed with, drawn up by George. It did not please Sir Thomas; he seems to have considered himself insufficiently noticed in the letter, which must have been an entire biography, for Billy hastened to assure him that "my brother has altered the beginning of his letter to Mr. Legge, and endeavoured to remove the objection you made to it by putting it thus, 'Out of my father's hands and mine he went to school, etc.' He is extremely sorry that it struck you in a light so very different from his real meaning." George must first have taken all the credit to himself; he always looked upon his youngest brother as his *élève*.

In his next letter Billy asked for thirty-seven pounds, his quarterly allowance, and also for "twenty pounds extraordinary to discharge me from all future attendance at Commons and Temple exercises. This is not much more than it would have cost me if I had continued at the Bar and done all these harpys require regularly, but I most heartily wish I had never been called to the Bar at all, and had saved you this needless expence.

"Crump is to be out of livery when he gets on the

other side of the water as Mons. le Valet de Chambre, and I believe will be very glad of a small remittance to fitt him out.”¹

Sir Thomas promptly inquired why Crump was to be out of livery, and Billy replied :

Crump would have been of no use to me in livery abroad because he could not have done the duty of a livery servant, as not understanding the language; but he promises to be very well content to put on his old clothes again when I return to England. I have, with my brother's approbation, hired an Italian who comes to me extremely well recommended. I have agreed to give him £10 per annum and half a guinea a week board wages when he comes on the other side of the water, and he is to find himself every thing. This I was informed was absolutely necessary for me to do, unless I chose rather to take my chance of getting a servant that understood German at Rotterdam or Utrecht : for that it would be next to impossible for me to travel so far into Germany with French alone. Had I trusted to a recommendation given me by a Dutch innkeeper, I might perhaps have got a rascal and should hardly have made a cheaper bargain.

There are only two letters from Berlin, where everything turned out as Pitt had planned. Billy wrote in November :

I am now in Mr. Legge's house and have an entire and unlimited command of all his affairs here both past and present, act as his secretary in every thing of the most important nature, and have the happiness to receive every mark of his regard that I can possibly desire. I am only sorry to say I shall not long be in so good a school of business, as Mr. Legge has received orders to prepare for his return.

¹ Crump was in William Lyttelton's service for over thirty years, and then was pensioned.

The other letter speaks of getting letters urging his own return, his presence at Bewdley being absolutely necessary. Mr. Bowles, the member, had been ill for some time and died in November; and soon after Billy joined his brothers and Pitt in the House of Commons.

Two years later young Lyttelton went to Paris, where he received a letter from William Pitt, who wrote from South Lodge, July 24, 1750 :

I have been running about ever since I received the honour and pleasure of your very deserving letter, or I should have returned you my best thanks for it sooner. I am for some days set down quiet in my little retreat of Enfield, and find myself so absolute a hermit, that I hardly know how to write to a man of the great world, fresh from the Court of Compiègne and consequently filled with all that is great and gallant. While I am sitting in much leisure under my tree I have the pleasure of thinking that you are much better employed; whether it be *à courir le cerf* with the King, or if for gentler sports you quit the savage field, etc., and are forming your style in purity and elegance in the delightfull school of some Court beauty. However you are occupied, I have the satisfaction to know that you are on the road to every accomplishment travelling is intended for, and I hope you find the journey pleasurable. I desire you will sometimes let me hear from you, and if I am an irregular correspondent you must impute it to my rambling about; for I lead so vagabond a life that no letter scarce reaches me as soon as it might. Believe me, my dear Lyttelton, my sincere wishes and very affectionate esteem go along with you wherever you are.

Billy's sojourn in Paris was marked by a contretemps which seems to have been the lot of most visitors to that city. "You will find by poor Billy's letter," wrote his father to Charles in July, "that he has paid severe tribute to the Seine water, which I warned him and his Sancho against, and advised him

to be at the expence of Bristol water if it was to be got." Billy was unwell for some time, and on hearing of his sad plight Pitt hastened to send him a letter of advice and sympathy, writing from the Pay Office, Sept. 20, 1750 :

I am infinitely concerned at the present low state of your health, and did immediately upon the reading your letter send for Burgess, who I thought a good judge of your constitution, to consult what might be properest for you to do; whether to go southward or to return to England. He is strongly of opinion that a more northerly climate is best for you; that is, the air of England, and advises that you should lose no time in leaving Paris, delay in cases of this hectic nature being sometimes of great consequence. Remembering how George and Harry Grenville had been recovered by elixir of vitriol, I asked Burgess if it was proper for you; and he recommends it of all things, provided you have no complaint upon you of the bowels. This elixir of vitriol may be taken twice a day in water (provided the water be good and not of the Seine) from forty, fifty, sixty to a hundred drops. You are desired not to make great journeys; and if you can bear it, get out of your chaise on horseback and gently ride for half a post now and then, if the weather be good.

Let me add my earnest desires to Burgess's advice to you to lose no time in leaving Paris. I am most sincerely anxious, my dear Lyttelton, for your health; much encouraged, however, to hope a speedy good effect from a good air, such as that of Hagley. I have been ill of an ugly quartan ague, and am not well able to write long, therefore without more ceremony God in Heaven bless you, my dear Lyttelton,
your ever affectionate

W. PITT.

Don't be anxious about Parliament. You will have time to get well before it meets; but of this make no mention.

After his retirement from Parliament in 1741, Sir Thomas never went to London again, and relied on his sons and his friends for news and entertainment from the outside world; nor were the pleasures of the table neglected. Richard Lyttelton wrote to his father on one occasion :

I thank Admiral Smith for his stewed lampreys, which have been eat to-day by the Bedford family, Lord Sandwich, and a great deal more company. I thank you too, Sir, for the potted lampreys, and am glad you liked the turbutts, tho' to say the truth I was more ashamed when I understood my servant had sent you two at a time than when I understood how small the first was. But he meant it well and I could not find it in my heart to be angry with him about it.

The difficulty of getting fish in those days made a present of it always welcome, even to donors of banquets in London. In the country stewponds were kept stocked with eels and other fresh-water fish were kept ready for when required. Sir Thomas much enjoyed these delicacies when his health allowed. "I hope," his eldest son writes anxiously about this time, "that though the burning in his stomach has returned that it does not spoil his appetite, which is the great support of his life." If Sir Thomas had eaten less perhaps his sufferings would have been less, but abstinence was then an unheard-of cure for gout. "My naughty stomach gives me no quarter," he tells Charles, "tho' I eat nothing yesterday but two wings of a boyled fowle. Morley brought me a delicate salmon motte of 10 pounds at 12^d per pound, this morning. I wish you were here to eat mine and your share of it."

Besides his gout, Sir Thomas had suffered for years from a severe form of heart disease, and was seldom

out of pain. At one time he was taking "100 drops of laudanum a dose at least three times a week, with rhubarb between," but he was forced to give the laudanum up. He seems even to have tried what lowering his diet would do, according to a letter from Richard, who had consulted one Dr. Duncomb, "a very humane, good-natured man, as well as extremely sensible and knowing," about his father's case. "He makes no doubt at all that your disorder is not entirely nervous, and suggests that some obstruction may be there," and "that a gouty disposition has been too suddenly checked by lowering your diet," whereas "Nature requires that tendency to be encouraged. . . . The Bath might produce that salutary end," but if Bath was out of the question Duncomb would send medicine. He also recommended moderate exercise, "but above all he begs you would not think of lowering your diet: on the contrary, though in small quantities and by slow degrees, to increase your allowance of wine, even to a pint."

Sir Thomas perhaps went to Bath, but nothing could do him much good; he thought of going again another time, for Richard writes from Lyons in 1750:

I was vastly pleased to hear you had thoughts of going to Bath. I have great hopes in the waters, and the cheerfulness that reigns there must be better for you than the length of a winter evening at Hagley; and surely tho' the motion of a coach may be too violent, that of a horse litter may be tolerable.

Probably this visit never came off. Though the long winter evenings at Hagley, and long days too, would not appeal to the gay Colonel Dick who was for ever on the move, his father loved every stick and stone of the place and was perfectly happy going about

it as far as he was able. He had written to Charles in the spring of this year :

I am extream weak, however do make shift to get out a little, when the weather permits, in my little chair, and was yesterday in the park and at the taphouse, which will be finished in about a week, and I assure you makes a considerable figure and will be a very commodious inn. . . . The oaks are as much out in the park as I ever remember them by the first week in May. The honisuckle at the parlour door in bloom; in short I believe the oldest man does not remember so forward a spring. I hope we shall have a pretty sprinkling of fruit of all sorts, and some in great abundance. I pray God you may be able to eat your share of it. . . .

The Lyttelton Arms still stands and bears out Sir Thomas's description of it. Sir Thomas wrote again July 21 :

You must expect a bad tything at Alvechurch this year. Hollier and Isaac both tell me that they never saw such wretched crops any where; a great deal hardly worth cutting. You may conclude I shall not be much better off at Frankley and the cold part of Hales Owen. Their hay too is half spoiled and little of it ended, as indeed mine and most people's hereabouts was. I have had none these three months but what I bought at a dear rate; and oats are 2 and 8 a bushel and still rising. The few they have in the cold lands will never be ripe if we have not a good deal of warm weather soon to make amends for the uncommon coldness we now feel.

Yesterday was a winter's day and rained from morning till midnight. I am sorry I could not entertain you more agreeably; I make shift to rub on *à l'ordinaire*, bad enough God knows, but always your most affectionate

T. L.

This is the last letter from Sir Thomas; he grew so much worse that early in August his sons and other friends were sent for to Hagley. There is an account of his last days written by Molly West, the niece who seems to have been more to him than his own daughters and who loved him as a father. When his sons arrived he wanted to give them "the most pleasing welcome in his power by appearing better than he really was," and went downstairs to greet them, but was forced to go up again before they came.

But a few days later he went down again into the parlour and sat at the table whilst we dined, for he was too ill to eat anything himself, but his attentions to us all and the spirit he gave to the conversation was very remarkable, for I think I never saw him more chearful or in higher good humour. I could not help expressing my surprise to him at his being able to exert himself in such a manner.

"Why, my dear Molly," answered he, "my intention in coming amongst you was to try for the time I stayed to make you all forget the condition I was in: and as I knew this would be my last effort in coming downstairs I was willing to do my utmost, and I thank God I have enjoyed much comfort and satisfaction—which *you*, naughty Molly," added he with a smiling countenance, "would have deprived me of had I given way to your fears. But I knew what I could do better than you did."

He lingered on for some days. "On Sunday the 8th," wrote Miss West, "I went to him after dinner and told him what company there was, and how heartily they eat his good things.

" 'And so,' says he, 'you are all tolerably chearful and go on as if I was amongst you. That's just as it should be; it's the greatest joy to me to have you do so. Let me go quietly to my grave: remember me but don't pine after me.' "

Next day "he got up so weak and low that with all the assistance we could give him we could hardly get

him to his great chair, and thought he would have fainted for the first time in his life." He sent for Charles to give him some last messages, after which Charles left the room "with hands and eyes uplifted. His father blessed him in the most affectionate and affecting manner." George and William then came in. "To the former he talked on business matters for the last time he should talk on them. . . . His sons then went from him in tears. His little grandson coming in said, 'I hope you are better, dear Grand-papa.' 'I hope I soon shall be my dear little boy, and that I am going to Heaven, and that a great many years hence my happiness will be increased by meeting you there. Be a good boy, and don't forget your old grandfather.' He kissed him with the utmost tenderness."

Sir Thomas died September 14, 1751, in the sixty-sixth year of his age. Molly West in her account dwells lovingly on her memories of him. How he "never missed having for several years of his life the collects and some portion of the Scriptures read to him every day; and when prayers were in church and he too bad to be carried there, I became his chaplain. And as his heart was always full of thanksgiving he was particularly fond of the *Te Deum*, which he never failed to have, and repeated with such warmth that it was a joy to hear him. . . . He often blessed God even for his pains, saying, 'How much better to bear than one profligate child.' . . ."

She speaks of his "zeal for the publick" and of the "creditable and hospitable manner in which he always lived," "Tho' for many years [he had] a difficult and distressed fortune, he has left his children in affluence, all owing to his judicious and constant attention to his affairs," and though "in the hands of a dishonest steward [he found] his estate in bad condition, he has left it greatly improved to his son."

This was the chief material aim of Sir Thomas's life, and great was his pride in having achieved it. His father had died so poor that Sir Thomas had to buy in his plate, coach, etc., and when he married, Sir Charles could only settle £300 a year on him in return for the £5,000 Christian Temple brought as her portion; whereas Sir Thomas was able to settle £1,000 a year on his eldest son when he married Lucy Fortescue, who had £8,000. These items are taken from an account of the "Extraordinary Payments" that Sir Thomas made and received during the years he was in possession at Hagley. Among the former is a sum of £7,000 paid in two General Elections, and £1,000 "lost in trying for a coal pitt." Among the latter is £8,000 "received from the Government in 24 years, free of deductions," for his post at the Admiralty.

With all his zeal in building up the family fortunes Sir Thomas was a lenient landlord. In March 1745 he promised Richard £200 to fit him for the campaign, telling him he could ill afford it, as "I have every penny of last Michlemas rent—viz. above £1400—due; two-thirds of last Lady Day, and more than half of Michlemas twelvemonth, besides arrears of a longer standing to a considerable amount."

CHAPTER II

THOMAS PITT AND HIS FAMILY

CHRISTIAN LYTTTELTON'S marriage with Thomas Pitt was a most unhappy one, though it began in a glamour of romance. He was handsome, rich and attractive, and she was a lovely girl of seventeen or eighteen when he saw her for the first time at the Opera, fell madly in love, proposed next day and was accepted. Everything seemed to promise happiness. Pitt was already a friend of Christian's brother, and Sir Thomas did not hesitate to give his consent, "though the uncommon beauty of my mother might have entitled her to the first matches in the Kingdom," says her son, who adds, however, that Sir Thomas was not then aware that Pitt "with a great nominal estate could contrive only £200 per annum jointure, and that with a fraud, by returning one of £2,000 bestowed upon her, and not a shilling for the provision of younger children." Nor did Sir Thomas know his son-in-law's true character, but less than a year after the marriage something occurred to open his eyes, for George wrote from abroad, March 11, 1729 :

What you say of Tom Pitt amazes me. I shall obey your advice in being cautious how I think any man my friend too soon, since he whose affection I was surest of has convinced me of my mistake. I confess I thought malice and ill-nature as great strangers to him as to poor Chris. I am glad you are so happy in your daughter; I love her dearly, and

resent any injury done to her much more than if it was done to me.

In truth Thomas Pitt was a terrible man, with more than a strain of the madness that ran through all his family. His son wrote of him that "all his passions were violent by nature, particularly pride and ambition, which were painted in his figure, one of the most imposing I ever saw." He had none of his brother's ability, and the only outlet for his ambition was in spending vast sums on elections, which, together with lawsuits and general extravagance, dwindled away his fortune and "gradually formed in him such habits of rapacity, injustice and violence, that he seemed at last to have lost even the sense of right and wrong." He quarrelled with his brother and most of his friends, but his immediate family suffered from him most.

There are a few scattered references to Christian Pitt's unhappy life in the Hagley letters. Lady Lyttelton writing to Charles in June 1736 says: "I was very angry at my son Pitt, I must own, and thought it very hard to deny me my request of seeing her for a few days at Hagley, which I had set my heart upon; but by what you say I find he was not so much to blame." A year later, when Pitt was trying to retrieve his fallen fortunes by selling Swallowfield, Lady Lyttelton wrote to Charles that she was glad to hear Pitt had got over the obstacles that prevented the sale, "and hope he will have success in the House of Commons this winter, tho' you have some fears about it, I find, which I am sorry for. There is now some chance of happiness for him and Crissy; that is a great comfort to me." But there was no happiness in store for them.

Christian Pitt had all her mother's goodness and

gentle, loving character, but her virtues were of no avail with a man like Thomas Pitt, and seem even to have turned him against her. He used to come up to London for the winter months with his sisters, leaving his wife with her children at Boconnoc, "then the worst and the gloomiest habitation of any gentleman in England," says her son, "to which my mother cheerfully consented, though she had no amusements but books of piety and works of charity, during his long absences in attending Parliament, election businesses, and the pleasures of the chace."

For some years their family consisted only of two little girls, but in 1737 the longed-for son arrived, which made Thomas Pitt "the happiest of men"; with the strange result, however, of turning his already cooled affection for his wife into aversion. He seems to have been egged on by his sisters Anne and Betty, particularly the latter, who had "the face of an angel and the heart of all the furies," says her nephew. Her influence with her brother "procured not only neglect, but every kind of insult towards his wife . . . too painful to dwell upon."

Mrs. Pitt endured everything as long as her children were with her; but when the boy was about seven years old his father put him to school at Marylebone, and sent the girls to one at Chelsea. He and his sisters went as usual to London for the winter, leaving Mrs. Pitt at Boconnoc alone. In despair she fled to take refuge with her father at Hagley; her husband summoned her back to Boconnoc, but only to make arrangement for a separation. He made her an allowance of £100 a year, to be doubled when her father died, upon the cruel condition that she should never see her children, "which continued till her death." She spent the last years of her life at Hagley, but the only mention of her is in a letter from Richard

Lyttelton to his father in March 1750, saying that he was very happy to hear that "dear Mrs. Pitt is got so well again. I hope she will live long to be a pleasure to her friends and a —— [blank in original] to her worthless husband." But she died in June that same year.

When young Thomas Pitt was about eleven his father removed him and his sisters from school and took them all down to Boconnoc, where he settled with them and his youngest sister Mary; he had now broken with the other two sisters. Mary Pitt was born in 1725. "A very sensible, modest, pretty sort of young woman," so Mrs. Montagu described her. She was certainly more easy to live with than most of her family, but even she, says Camelford, had "a peculiar twist in her understanding which made it very dangerous to have transactions with her." But she meant well and the young Pitts seem to have been fond of her. Life at Boconnoc was very dull for the two girls, but Tom, a delicate, sensitive boy, was, as he says, better off than at school, where he had been miserable. A neighbouring clergyman became his tutor, educated him well, and was his best friend at this time. His pupil speaks of him with great affection and gratitude.

After Mrs. Pitt's death her family tried to get into touch with the unhappy children, but it was not easy, as Thomas Pitt and the Lytteltons had had no intercourse for years. There are some letters from a correspondence carried on, unknown to Pitt, between his daughters and their uncle Charles, whom since childhood they had rarely seen. The letters give an impression of their dreary lives; every sentence breathes fear, and their chief idea was to mollify and circumvent their father. The first is from Amelia, the eldest, in February 1751; she was then nearly

nineteen, and wrote about a legacy left them by their mother, and some trinkets that had belonged to her, which Dr. Charles, then Dean of Exeter, had undertaken to send to them.

We both return you many thanks for the trouble you have been at about us. . . . You did very right not to speak of the £100 you mention, for your speaking of it in your first letter is enough. Mr. Bennett has told me that my papa intends to pay it, but if he did not I should be very sorry if that should occasion any difference between you, for I should be very glad to have all your differences made up, that we might have the pleasure of seeing you. I am very glad your letter had so good an effect upon my papa, and am very much obliged to you for taking the hint I gave you. Your being so good has encouraged me to speak one thing more: that is, if you could contrive to make him a visit before he comes into the country, either at his arriving at Exeter or when you return to London, it will greatly facilitate your seeing us here.

As to the watch and rings, you may be sure he won't trouble his head about such trifles, and will not think of taking them out of your hands or mine. We are very much obliged to you for the testimonies of affection you express for us, and the care you have taken of our interest, and should be glad if we could shew our sence of it by actions as well as by words. I should be glad to know into whose hands my mother's papers fell, and if there is any of my letters among them.

The next few letters say little, for there was little to say. "We have been a tour in the west this summer," writes Christian, the younger girl, nearly two years later, "which was very agreeable, as it was at least some change." Their uncle sent them books to relieve the monotony, for which the poor girls were "very grateful." Then come letters concerning a

legacy left them by their grandfather. The first, dated January 1753, is an official letter signed by them both, saying they would like the money to be laid out in lace; Dean Lyttelton, knowing what a queer customer Thomas Pitt was, had stipulated that a formal request should be made him. Another letter from Amelia speaks of the Dean having been some time to see them at Boconnoc, and there having been a "constant run of company," so perhaps life had been pleasanter for the two girls, though vigilance was no less necessary in their relations with their father. She writes in February 1753:

I have not told my papa of your laying out the money, for I don't care to say more than I need to him upon the subject; and I believe he had rather I should say as little as possible. I'll assure you it was our own choice to have lace instead of jewels; for we were a saying one day that we liked a handsome suit of lace better than a midling set of jewels. Upon which my papa asked us if we would not like to have the money spent in lace than earrings? Upon which we said yes, and if he would give me leave I would write to you concerning it; and for the better disguising our private correspondence I asked Mr. Bennett before him, where to direct you.

My papa will set out very soon for London. If you would be so good as to perform your obliging promise of going to visit him, we should be very glad; for believe me there is nothing I wish so much as the uniting of the two families. There is no talk yet of my brother's going from hence, and I very much fear he is destined to stay another twelvemonth; but I beg you will not let any body know you had it from me. My papa was not at all angry at your lending him the books. They are very fine, and my brother will write you a more particular account of them when he returns them, which shall be at the time appointed and with all the care possible.

In March 1753 young Tom Pitt wrote to the Dean, in the same wistful strain.

I assure you I am very glad to hear of Sir George's recovery, as I cannot but have the greatest concern for the safety of all my dear mother's relations. Had it pleased God to let me shew my affection to her dear person, how much greater would have been my satisfaction! But as she is gone to a place more worthy her goodness, the only thing that remains is to shew my respect for her memory by my regard for the welfare of her family. But you have laid me under double obligations by the tenderness you have shewn me, and of course my ingratitude would be double if I did not subscribe myself your most affectionate nephew,

THOMAS PITT.

The lace was chosen by Lady Lyttelton, and the Dean sent it to his brother-in-law's house in London. Pitt returned it at once with an angry letter.

With regard to my giving you a receipt as you desire, it is what to deal frankly with you I cannot comply with. That trifling legacy to my daughters, instead of making their mother's fortune up, at least to them, equal to either of her sisters, is indeed beneath my regard; and I do not think fit to concern myself about it one way or the other. I must take notice that you are extremely mistaken in saying that you have substituted lace instead of jewels in compliance with my request as well as your nieces. For I am sure it should be very far from my thoughts to make a request concerning a legacy which, in the light I see it, appears so very despicable. I return you the boxes unopened, for you to dispose of as you please; and you will execute that important office of executor, especially in regard to this legacy, in the most advisable and most agreeable manner to yourself.

To this the Dean replied with some heat :

It was in pursuance of your own request and that of your daughters signified to me by their letter, and confirmed by the conversation I had with you on Sunday sen'night at the drawing room, that I was induced to lay out my father's legacy to Miss Pitts in lace instead of jewels; and I had all imaginable reason to believe that I should oblige you in so doing. But since I find my endeavours are fruitless I need not give you or myself any further trouble.

For some time the affair seemed at a deadlock, but the sisters eventually arrived at a solution. Amelia came of age in June 1753 and so could claim her lace, and Christian wrote to propose that

As my sister is now of age, may I not choose her guardian for my share of the lace, and by that means receive mine at the same time she does hers? If you approve of it we should be obliged if you would let us know of it as soon as possible that we may put it into execution.

Miss Mary desires her compliments to you and is much obliged to you for your kind wishes; and she hopes to be ready for you by the time you are Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Dean approved of this scheme, and Amelia wrote in July to beg that the lace might be sent soon, as she might be "a going to Bath in the autumn. . . . I conclude with our duty to our uncles and aunt at Tunbridge." "How happy should we be were we but there," she added wistfully, "but I shall run on for too long on so favourite a subject. If you please to send the lace by the carrier directed to me, with a particular charge to take care of it. My father knows of it."

Dr. Lyttelton was nothing if not careful and wrote

for further instructions; to which Christian replied, evidently in a fever of impatience :

We are very much obliged to you for the care you take for the safe conveyance of our lace, but I do assure you it will come very safe by the carrier's horses from Exeter to Boconnock; and the quickest way from London to Exeter will be by Fry's Flying waggon. All our clothes come to Boconnock by that means, and even the stores, when there is not enough to make it worth while to send it by sea, come that way. Therefore if you would send it immediately we should be much obliged to you.

The lace at length arrived. "It is excessively handsome," writes Amelia in high delight, "and if we had chose it ourselves it would not have been more to our liking." She begs her uncle to make "our respectful compliments to Lady Lyttelton and thank her for the trouble she has taken in chusing the lace." But, alas! the chance of wearing it did not come. In November Amelia wrote sadly to say :

I should have answered my dear uncle's letter before now had I not flattered myself with the hopes of seeing him soon at Bath. But it has so happened that my father, my Aunt Mary, and my brother, set out last Monday for London, and there is only my sister and I here. I cannot say much for my health at present, but I am taking a medicine which I hope will do me good without going to Bath. If I am not better soon I am to write my case to my father in London very exactly, that he may consult the physicians there. You may easily imagine that it was very uneasy to us to part with my brother and my aunt; but it was high time they should both go from hence, therefore I cannot complain of their being gone, but that *we* did not go too. However, we must make ourselves as easy as we can for the time we stay here, as my father (when he took his leave of us) gave his

word that this should be the last time he should go without us. I beg you will not mention this to any body. As you have sufficiently shewn your concern for our welfare, I should reproach myself for not telling you what was to become of us as far as we know. . . .

If Sir George should come down as far as Oakhampton we should be very happy if he would come and give us a look at Boconnock. As we have the satisfaction of hearing he has visited my father, it could not be taken amiss, but would be most gratefully acknowledged by us, who desire nothing more than to be acquainted with the rest of my relations, especially on my poor mother's side, as it is the only means left for us to shew our regard to her.

Thomas Pitt was taking his son to Cambridge, where his relations thought he should have been sent before. During their stay in London the youth, now getting on for seventeen, was introduced to his uncle, William Pitt, who, evidently expecting to meet a young untutored savage, was charmed to find his nephew, as he told him afterwards, "so well disposed by nature, and so properly attentive to make yourself genteel in person and well bred in behaviour."

Some few months after Tom Pitt went to Cambridge there came a crisis in his father's affairs; debts accumulated for years now threatened to overwhelm him. For the moment, quite broken down by the catastrophe, the poor half-crazy man turned to his children and sought their advice. They were all down in Cornwall when, says his son, "my father declared to us the distress of his situation. His tenderness made up for the unkindness of his former behaviour, and increased our sympathy in his misfortunes. He exposed to us three plans for him to pursue—to continue at Boconnoc upon the most confined establishment where he had holden so high a

situation, to retire to some country town in England where he would have been engaged in all the gossipry of a contracted society without the benefits of it, or to live abroad till I should come of age to put an end to all his sufferings. Incapable as we were of judging, he insisted with a degree of superstition that we should decide for him; which we did in favour of the last proposition, which appeared to us the most advisable.

“Under these circumstances we took leave of poor Boconnoc, where I had passed the pleasing hours of childhood, to neglect and the mercy of creditors. Methinks I still hear the last cheer of the poor labourers assembled on the green before the house when the coach drove from the door.”

When they came to London another crisis arose. William Pitt and Sir Richard Lyttelton¹ urged upon their nephew not to go abroad. They said that away from all his friends his father would “make a property of me in time to my own ruin as well as that of such as were after me in the entail.”

Tom fully realised that there were but too strong grounds for their fears, and agreed to stay. William Pitt dictated a letter for him to his father “full of respect and professions of unalterable devotion to his interests when I should be of age,” but begging his permission to stay on at Cambridge till then, and have the benefit of an English education.

As the violence of my father's temper made it impossible to urge these arguments by word of mouth, and I knew him capable of any extremity to carry a point so important to him, it was concerted that I should elope from his lodgings in London and make the best of my way to Cambridge, and that the letter should be delivered to him some hours after my

¹ Colonel Lyttelton was made a Knight of the Bath in 1753.

departure. When he received it the poor man was frantic with rage, grief and disappointment. A correspondence ensued between us such as may be imagined, which ended in a letter to my tutor to insist on my being sent immediately to London. This produced its effect by a menace of expulsion from College, which I was simple enough to apprehend. I took refuge in the house of Dr. Ayscough, who afforded me protection in that dreadful moment. It is an obligation I owe him; with all his faults he was officiously friendly where it did not thwart his own material interests.

I will not describe the interviews with my father or the various shapes he condescended to assume with me to change my resolution. . . . He almost broke my heart, but could not bend me from my purpose. . . . The violent emotions with which these scenes affected me left a sensible impression upon my health, and nervous disorders, which some time after increased upon me to a very alarming degree, owed their origin to anxiety of mind.

The nervous disorders were epileptic fits, from which he suffered for some years. Both Tom's uncles continued their paternal interest in him after he returned to Cambridge and his father went abroad. Sir Richard, whom he had first met on arriving in London from Cornwall, at once won his affection, and at first he liked his Uncle William; but it was difficult for any Pitt to remain long in friendship, especially with one another. Young Tom inherited the more benign disposition of his mother's family, but he was not without a streak of resemblance to the warped Titans on his father's side. William Pitt began by paying his expenses, his father not having the wherewithal; but when in the autumn of 1755 Pitt lost his place as Paymaster of the Forces, "he gave poverty as his excuse for no longer supporting me, except with advice and books, which he occasionally sent me, and Sir

Richard was from that hour to all intents and purposes my father," and a more affectionate, liberal and indulgent father, says Tom, no man ever had. This seems a sensible arrangement; one uncle being rich and childless, the other poor, with a growing family. But Tom never forgave Pitt. The "advice" he mentions so cursorily was a series of wise and affectionate letters written to him at Cambridge, all through the time when Pitt was Secretary of State and in the full vortex of political affairs; but this made no difference, and the nephew's animosity did not cease with his uncle's death.

Little is known of the Pitt family's travels abroad.

The change from the previous monotony must have enchanted the sisters, and at first even their father seems to have unbent, away from the atmosphere of elections and debt. Tom tells his uncle Pitt of a letter from "those good girls my sisters. . . . They give a charming account of Normandy and seem at present in the best of spirits. . . . Indeed the people are civil and everybody is good-humoured." He evidently meant his father by this, and the statesman understood it so. "I rejoice exceedingly," he replied in his lofty style, "that your father and the girls are not unentertained in their travels."

At Utrecht the travellers fell in with Lord Shelburne, then nineteen, who was so much struck with Thomas Pitt that he stayed on purpose to talk to him; and they spent the whole night in conversation. He says Pitt "abounded in anecdote," chiefly of the Prince of Wales and the time he was connected with him; that Pitt "branded his brother with the most abusive epithets," and "upon enquiry afterwards his brother did much the same by him."

For three years Thomas Pitt and his daughters remained abroad, spending the last part of the time

in Switzerland. It must have been in the spring of 1758, when young Tom, then nearing his majority, "received one morning a note to say an old friend would be happy to see me at a tavern in Bond Street. What was my astonishment when from behind the screen I saw my father advance towards me!" He was not only astonished but very much alarmed, for his father had run the risk of being arrested for debt. Pitt told him he had walked openly from Westminster Bridge, that he was in bad health and had resolved to come over and try and make arrangements with his son and his creditors, whereby he might again live in England.

All this, says Tom, had a terrible effect on his own shattered nerves, but he at once set to work, first to find his father a safe place to hide in, which took two or three days. Pitt made Tom swear to keep his return a secret, even from Sir Richard, though Tom was then staying with him. This occasioned a coolness with Sir Richard when he found it out, further aggravated by one of the Grenvilles, who made mischief between them over a quarrel then raging between William Pitt and his sister Anne, in which Sir Richard took William's part and Tom Pitt Anne's.

There now follows in the Camelford MSS. many pages describing how the boy of twenty-one coped with the tangled mass of business that fell to him to unravel directly he came of age. Besides his father's debts and his sisters dowries, there were quarrels with his aunt Mary,¹ who demanded money, and endless discussions with William Pitt, who was next in the entail; discussions doubtless not without acrimony,

¹ Mary Pitt was not born till after her grandfather's death, and so did not benefit by his will, in which he made settlements on all the others.

but even on the nephew's showing his uncle did not behave ungenerously.

"At length the task was over—the writings were signed. I bound myself to pay my father's debts, gave £5,000 a piece to my sisters, settled the claim of Mrs. Mary, calculated principal and interest with Mr. W. Pitt; in short I left not one person or claim unsatisfied. Then I made my appeal to Sir Richard Lyttelton. 'These are my deeds! In what have I offended?' He embraced me with transport and restored me to his friendship."

In 1759, after all was settled, Pitt and his daughters went to live at Abbot's Anne, a small place of his in Hampshire, and young Tom, "now a vast favourite with everyone," according to his uncle the Dean, started on his travels abroad. He went first to Portugal in the train of Lord Kinnoull, Ambassador to Lisbon, which he greatly enjoyed, and afterwards joined Sir Richard and his wife in Italy. Walpole recommended him to Sir Horace Mann, "not only as a most ingenious young man, but a most amiable one. He has an odious father, and has insisted on glorious cuttings off of entails on himself that his father's debts may be paid and his sisters provided for."

Thomas Pitt did not fulfil a contract to allow his son money, and he still lived at Sir Richard's expense. Tom therefore filed a bill in Chancery against his father, but regretted it later, believing that Pitt was really not in a position to pay him, and that he had only added to the "various vexations which were not the less painful by his having brought them on himself." One of these vexations was that Amelia and Christian had left him.

"His youngest daughter," says Tom, "had engaged the attention of a Mr. Saunders,¹ of good

¹ Thomas Saunders had been Governor of Madras.

family, who was lately returned from Madras with a considerable fortune. My father at first encouraged his addresses, and afterwards when everything was concluded, delayed the marriage under pretences which made them determine upon marrying in secret. This occasioned a quarrel, and was followed by their leaving his house and taking with them his eldest daughter, who had sufficient reason to justify her desertion of him."

Fortune seemed at last to have smiled on the unhappy sisters. In a letter to Dean Lyttelton of March 1760, Mrs. Montagu says :

Let me congratulate you on the marriage of Miss Kitty Pitt. She is a rich and happy bride. Governor Saunders has charmed Lord Lyttelton¹ by his good sense and behaviour. Miss Emily is with her sister and I hope they will live very happily. It must be a great felicity to these young ladies to live under the dominion of a reasonable and worthy man, after having suffered all that pride, passion, and tyranny could inflict; and I hope our friend at Lisbon will feel himself relieved of many cares. He could not but feel himself solicitous for young ladies in their situation.

His daughters' desertion seems to have driven Thomas Pitt almost distracted. He knew not what to do with himself. At times he thought of returning to Switzerland, at times of staying on at Abbott's Anne, but finally resolved to end his days in Cornwall at the Dower House. He then suddenly married privately the daughter of a General Murray, "above forty years of age, without any advantages of mind, or person, or education." The Dower House was prepared for his arrival, and as soon as it was ready he went down with his wife, "little imagining, when

¹ Sir George Lyttelton was made a peer in 1756.

he talked of placing himself near the vault where his family were deposited, how soon he should find his place among them." Only a fortnight later he died of a stroke, in the spring of 1761.

His son was in Italy with Sir Richard Lyttelton when he got the news. "It was at St. Cassiano that the same post brought me a letter from the poor man to notify his marriage and one from my uncle to inform me of his death. Though this event brought so many advantages to me, I can with sincerity declare that the first emotions were of the most painful kind, and that I paid a heartily unaffected tribute of tears to his memory. I will not, however, dissemble that when this tribute to nature was once paid, I felt with no small satisfaction the change in my situation. I was now for the first time a free man, no longer dependant for my subsistence upon the kindness of another. . . . I had now the world before me."

He hurried back to England full of these pleasant thoughts, but only a few weeks after his arrival sustained a real sorrow. His best-loved sister Christian died after the birth of a child. In telling of her death he says that "she was pleasing in her countenance, which, if it did not quite amount to beauty, had the same effect upon all who saw her, and had the sweetest and gentlest manners that ever adorned a woman. Her choice did not turn out as fortunate as we had at first flattered ourselves, which was no small consolation to my affliction."

Poor Kitty seems to have been almost as unhappy in her married life as her mother had been. Sir Richard, in a letter of condolence to his nephew, says :

I am not surprised at what you say of Governor Saunders' absurdity and brutal disposition. He must have been a brute indeed to have behaved ill to poor

Kitty, who certainly had sweetness of temper and complacency enough to have reclaimed and softened the most obdurate nature. But since she was so unfortunately circumstanced, it was on the whole better for her (tho', poor creature, she deserved a better lot) and better for you, who would have often been made unhappy by her sufferings and could never have had any pleasure or comfort in her society, that God should have taken her out of a situation that threatened so much misery. I sincerely lament her and so does the good Duchess; and we think you have been very unlucky in respect of her fortune, as well as that you are to pay to Emily; but life is chequered.

The elder Miss Pitt, "whose person and manners were by no means captivating as the younger's were," was equally unfortunate in her marriage, which took place some time after her father died. Her husband was one William Spry, LL.D., whom her brother describes as "a man of no birth, who had been travelling tutor to a son of Lord Breadalbane abroad, where they had met and where she had conceived a violent partiality for him. He was bred to the Civil Law. I some time after procured from Mr. Grenville for him to be appointed Judge of the Admiralty Court in Barbadoes, from whence he was advanced to Governor of Barbadoes, where he died, after having first buried his poor wife, who had experienced from him such treatment as determined me not to wear mourning for his death."

CHAPTER III

BENJAMIN MOODIE OF MELSETTER

AMONG Thomas Smith's correspondence is a packet from Lieutenant Benjamin Moodie of Melsetter in the Orkneys, who had served under him during the '45, when Smith was Commander-in-Chief off the coast of Scotland. Few though they are they reveal something of the wild and lawless state of Scotland at that time.

Benjamin Moodie was the only surviving son of Commodore James Moodie, a tough old sailor who had had a long and adventurous career. Once during a battle he was severely wounded, but after his wound was dressed he went on giving orders from an armchair on deck. Many other naval services he performed, one of which gained him the bâton of an Austrian Field-Marshal; and he commanded the ship which brought George I to England.

His death was as dramatic as his life, for when eighty years of age he was murdered by Alexander Stewart and his brother, Sir James Stewart of Burray. Moodie was a strong Hanoverian and the Stewarts were Jacobites, so there was already a feud between them before the incident which brought vengeance in its train. Commodore Moodie's wife was many years younger than himself, and Alexander Stewart pursued her with attentions in spite of her resentment; her husband forbade him the house, and when Stewart persisted, Moodie had him caught and soundly flogged. The Stewarts determined on revenge, and bided their time till one day Moodie came to Kirkwall to hold a

Justice Court. The brothers with their servants lay in wait, and when the old man appeared, they set upon him with sticks, and he was finally shot by a servant placed in ambush for that purpose.

Benjamin Moodie, born in 1722, was but two years old when his father was killed; but it is said he vowed revenge from the moment his mother first told him of it. In 1745 he went into the army as lieutenant in the 46th, Colonel Murray's regiment, on the Irish establishment, and was afterwards transferred to the 47th with the rank of captain. When the Rebellion broke out his chance came.

After the battle of Culloden he got leave from the Duke of Cumberland to proceed against the rebels in the Orkneys, in command of a detachment of the 47th, and with two parties of marines, each commanded by a lieutenant. Back he hastened, thirsting for revenge. He arrived one morning at daybreak on the island of Burray. But Sir James Stewart had been warned; he was not in his house, and Moodie found him down by the seashore in his nightcap.¹ The Jacobite fled in terror to a neighbouring barn and hid under some straw. When Moodie pursued him there, Stewart fell on his knees and told Moodie to take his revenge. He took him prisoner, and a few days later both Sir James and his brother were sent to the Tower of London. There while awaiting trial an old servant came to see them, and pretending to kiss his master, slipped a lancet under his tongue. The two brothers bled themselves to death, thus saving their property from confiscation; but Benjamin Moodie had avenged his father.

¹ The account the above is taken from merely says that Moodie found Sir James "strolling by the seashore in his nightcap." But daybreak in early spring in the North is hardly the time to stroll for choice on the seashore.

Other Jacobite lairds hearing of Moodie's arrival, took refuge in a cave on the Island of Westray, where food was brought to them secretly by a poor man till the search was over and the troops had left. Moodie burnt several of their houses; his own had been devastated by the rebels early in the day, and when the owners of Hellsness begged him to spare theirs, he replied pertinently, "Whose side began the spuylie (spoiling)?" and burnt Hellsness.

This crowded hour of glorious life ended with the '45, and Moodie spent the remainder of his days in a dreary struggle with adversity. His first letter to Admiral Smith is written August 3, 1748, from Scarborough, as for some years after the Rebellion it was not safe for him to live in the Orkneys. This was only one of the misfortunes the poor young man was labouring under. He had had no redress from the Government for the destruction of his house, and now a lawsuit had been started in the name of one James Fea of Cleastrain, whose house had been destroyed in the Rebellion, against some loyalist officers. Moodie to his surprise was not included among them, but he took it for granted that this prosecution, if successful, would be only the first of many, and that his turn would come. He sent the papers to Smith, as the defence was that Cleastrain's house had been burnt by three naval officers, and therefore if restitution was due it should be paid by the Government. Moodie also enclosed papers about his own losses, the perusal of which, he said,

will, I hope, make the Government take some notice of me, who with my family have even been the butt of the Jacobites. At least I hope they'll interfere in this prosecution, which if not stoppd must ruin most of us concerned in it, and lay every officer who was employed in extinguishing the late Rebellion under

the like processes. But my case is remarkably hard. Other officers were there on duty with their respective regiments, but I made offer of my life and fortune (long before anything conclusive was done by the army) in defence of his Majesty's interest; for which I am pursued and put to expence, my own expence on the service not paid me, no consideration given me for being singled out as the only man in a whole county to be plundered by the rebels, who knew I was stifest against their interest.

Moodie says another time that he was "the only gentleman in these parts then in the King's service."

In his next letter the persecuted lieutenant thanks the Admiral for "the readiness you shew to defend us from the malice of our enemies, who seem to complain because they were not treated so badly as they deserved." And a few days later he sends some further instructions :

Mr. Mitchelson is very right in saying that enquiry should be made whether or not any of the people present at the burning of Cleastrain's house (the soldiers, sailors, or others) be now from sea, so that they might be examined, for I expect from the ignorance and dependance of Cleastrain's people, he'll make them swear as his honour pleases. Mean while I have left no stone unturned to prepare matters in Orkney for their defence, and I hope the pursuers and all other such impudent disaffected locusts will be disappointed in their designs to hurt us.

James Fea of Cleastrain must have been a bold buccaneer, from a story Moodie tells of him, upon inquiry from Smith :

The story of the pyrate is this. James Fea of Cleastrain by some means or other surprised Gow the pyrate and took him; but in the time that the *Weesle* and *Grayhound* frigates were sent by the

Government in quest of Gow, whom they had heard was in the Orkneys, Cleastrain, it is said, greatly embazzled his cargo and stores. Upon which the Treasury or Exchequer had him arrested; but he was liberate upon baill that he should answer for his conduct at a certain time. When the time came Cleastrain was gone to the Orkneys. Whereupon fresh warrants were issued to secure his person; but he cunningly prevailed on the then deputy Sherraef to return affidavit that James Fea of Cleastrain was that year dead. It is true James Fea the elder died that year, but not Gow's apprehender, which was himself and the only Fea they wanted.

The proceedings against the loyalists seem to have been dropped, as Moodie makes no further mention of them. Seven years later, however, he says: "We have a report in Orkney that Fea of Cleastrain, whose house the Capts Lloyd, Haldane, and Milnbank, burnt, has got oris (?) to get £1,582 sterling, besides a deduction of his ffeu duties payable out of his estate to the Crown. If so I shall humbly think that I have some reason to live in good hopes." But whether this was true and whether Moodie received any payment in the end does not appear.

In the autumn of 1748 Moodie went up to London, where he stayed at the "British Coffee House, Charyng Cross," the popular resort of his countrymen. He went to seek promotion, but two years later wrote from Milton in Clydesdale, having left London, "being unable to bear the pain of fruitless attendance and dependance longer." He had written, he says, to propose to the "Secretary at Warr," that failing promotion he would be satisfied with a pension or civil post of £200 a year, or to be indulged with leave to sell my lieutenancy, "and have a pension of £100 a year besides, which would be no more than the interest of what I have lost by losses and dependance,"

and being obliged to live away from the Orkneys, "where if I attempted to reside I behooved to lie daily under the apprehension of being assassinated as my father was." Moodie begged for Smith's help in this quest, but his answer much depressed the poor lieutenant, who could scarcely believe his friend was not all-powerful. He wrote from Edinburgh, January 26, 1751 :

The bad success you are like to have from H.R.H. the Duke alarms and affects me greatly. But I hope that if the memorial is delivered to the King and any of your friends back it, or that any of the Lords of the Bedchamber then in waiting remind his Majesty that you countenance it, it may be of great service to me and save me from great inconvenience.

Moodie went back to the Orkneys in the course of the next two years, his life apparently being now safe there. He wrote to Smith from Kirkwall in 1753. By this time he had given up hopes of the civil post and the pension, but was still thinking of selling his commission, as the price of it would "enable me to do my heart's desire"; namely, to pay his debts.

I am determined never to joyn my Corps *in statu quo*, having suffered many juniors to purchase over me, in hopes of preferment without purchasing, in consequence of many great men's positive promises. Had I purchased when I first had the honour of serving under you, I would now have in course been Major of the regiment. Fortune seems very unkind in thus allowing great men to do little things, and putting it out of the power of little men to do great things.

On the advice of the Admiral and his brother George, Moodie applied for leave to sell out; but even in this difficulties arose; "for it seems," he wrote, "the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland must give

his previous consent to all officers on the Irish establishment so disposed, before they obtain it here." This Smith obtained through Lord George Sackville, son of the Duke of Dorset, then Lord Lieutenant; but Lord George also wrote that he thought Lieut. Moodie should know that the Duke of Cumberland had mentioned his name several times as an officer to be promoted. Poor Moodie felt this was a slender foundation to build any hopes upon, and his next letter shows his wishes were unchanged. He wrote from Melsetter in December 1754, having heard through a friend that Lord George was

ready to forward my selling out how soon I transact the thing in a regular manner with the regiment. It is very reasonable that the regiment should have the first offer of buying the commission; but supposing none of them are able or willing to give as much for it as I can gett from other unexceptionable men, would it not be hard, or at least unlucky, if I should be obliged to sell at a low price? Mr. Perrin of Great Poultney Street, agent, a worthy man and my friend, writes me that he has a young fellow to whom there can be no objections made, ready to give £650 for it. Be it as it will I am determined to sell.

He went on to speak of "an advantageous and honourable offer" made to him by the Admiral, and that (in a letter now lost) he had already given his reasons for not "readily and without hesitation embracing of it."

I repeat [he continued] that I expect to make much more by this little spott I now drudge on by my own industry, than any man will give me for it, which will the sooner enable me to pay my debts; and till that is done I never can enjoy an easy hour. But if I by any unlucky hitt gett myself extracted from difficulties, I still am determined to convince you that I

prefer your company to that of any other man upon earth.

I have wrote in the mean time to Gen^l Murray my colonel, praying him to let me make the most of my commission, as he knows my sufferings and unhappy situation. He was ever kind to me and is a good natured man; but out of sight out of mind is the case with too too many. Every gentleman has not a soul like yours.

His forebodings more or less came true, for in the following May he writes :

My colonel (Major Gen^l Thos. Murray) had once agreed to lett it [the commission] go in favour of one Mr. Murray of Col. Bockland's regiment; but since inclining to preferr one Mr. Connor of his own, dis-sapointed Mr. Murray and me. It has not gone on for want of an ensign to purchase the colours, but I hope that will now be removed, as a gentleman in Ireland is offering. If I may regard, as I think I ought, Mr. Perrin's hints, the truth is the General is poor and wants to feel a little on these occasions.

Meanwhile a gleam of joy had crossed his path. In the spring of 1755 he married Miss Henrietta St. Clair of Oligg. "I told you in my last," he wrote to Smith, "that I had taken a lady by the hand for better for worse, and now after some trial of her I hope I shall have cause of thinking my fate very propitious; since those external advantages which attract most men, are the least part of those which Providence, and a good understanding, principles, and education, has bestowed upon her."

The sale of his commission hung fire, but a few months later he had heard from the regimental agent in Dublin that the memorial in regard to it had passed the Irish Government, and the agent hoped "that a commission for my successor will be among the first

signed by his Majesty on his return to England." But nothing happened, not even leave to sell his commission, as he had not purchased it in the first place. When he next writes, in January 1757, he seems almost dazed with the heart-sickening failure and disappointment in spite of "the pains taken by one of the most amiable of women and the best of companions" to cheer him up. He was preparing a statement of the damages done to his house to send to the Admiral, who had promised to do his best to get it attended to. From Smith alone, whom he called "the only sincere and honest friend I ever had," Moodie hoped for relief which might enable him

to preserve my small estate entire, and also my small fortune of about £200 sterling per annum, which with care and œconomy would, I find, furnish me a moderate share of the comforts as well as necessaries of life, and enable my wife and me to give the dear and tender pledges of our mutual loves such education as might be suitable to their genius and rank in the world. This, I find, is absolutely impracticable under our present difficulties and embarrassments, the growing interest of mortgages and encumbrances swelling so as soon to swallow up my whole capital. . . . I beg leave to hint at another method of doing me considerable service, which is by obtaining some small sine cure place or by tacking me as a small draw back on someone who may get any more lucrative place, and this I am told is often done; and a very small thing in the estimation of some would make me and mine happy. I'm afraid you'll now begin to think that I have thrown aside all shame; and it is most certain there is no other person in the world beside to whom I'd presume to write with such freedom.

This is the last letter in the packet, so that whether Lieutenant Moodie obtained any of his desires is not

known. He died in 1769, the father of thirteen children, and was succeeded by his eldest son James, afterwards a major in the army. The fortunes of the family steadily declined. In the words of one of Major Moodie's sons, "debts accumulated on debts, with interest, law expenses, and all the miseries that gather round the declining fortunes of a proud and ancient race." After describing his grandfather's doings in the '45, he says: "These were crimes in our family not soon to be forgotten in a country where enmities are carefully handed down from father to son, and it is not to be wondered at that the other proprietors regarded the falling fortunes of our house with secret satisfaction." ¹

On the death of Major James Moodie, Melsetter had to be sold, much to the grief of his eldest son, who then emigrated with his brothers; some went to Canada and some to South Africa, where they prospered, and some of their descendants returned to England.

¹ From *Ten Years in South Africa*, by Lieutenant J. W. D. Moodie.

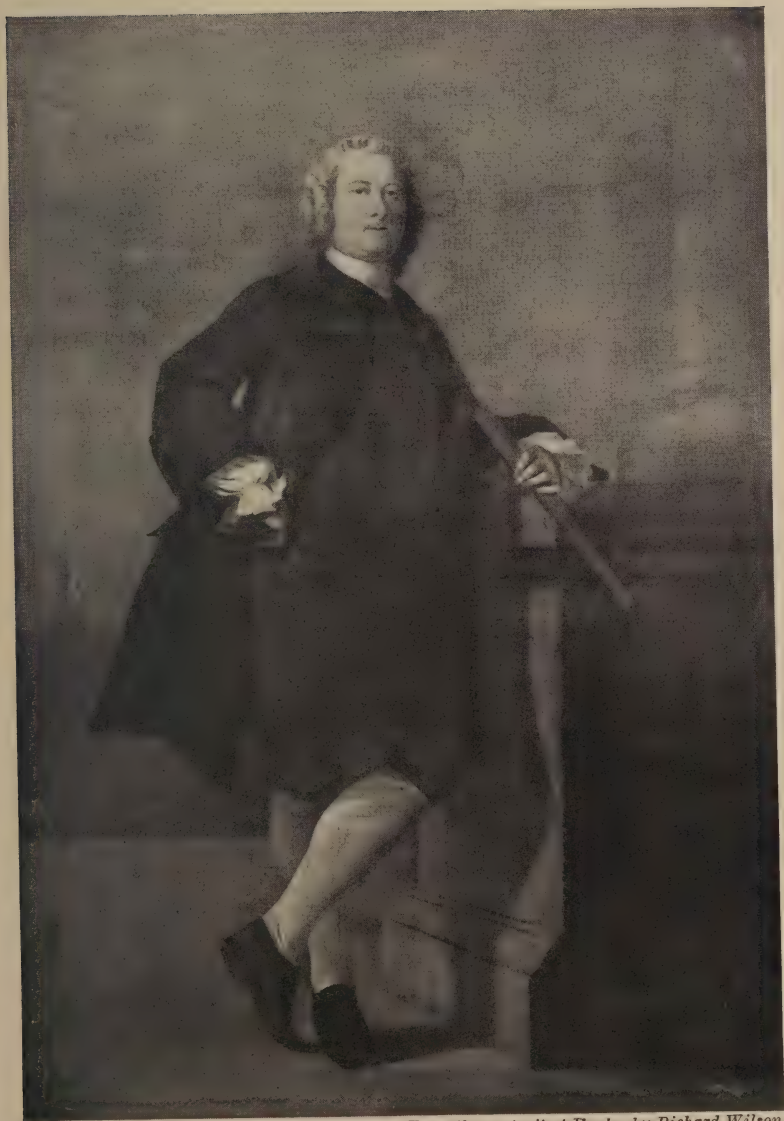
CHAPTER IV

LIFE IN THE NAVY IN PEACE TIME. ADMIRAL SMITH AND HIS FRIENDS

THE War of the Austrian Succession came to an end in 1748, and with very little result, notwithstanding the enormous losses in men, money and ships. It had cost England eight millions; the National Debt was increased to eighty millions, and the Government looked about to find what they could tax and where retrench. The Army and Navy were greatly reduced; the number of seamen to 17,000 from 40,000. Thousands of unfortunate men were penniless, the prisons filled to overflowing; and hundreds of officers were put on half-pay, which barely supported those with families unless they had been lucky in winning prize-money. Admiral Smith¹ had been on half-pay for a year, but he was one of the lucky ones: letters from some of his less fortunate brother officers, however, show how bad things were. The first is from Captain Barker, for whom Smith had obtained a ship a few years before.

Plymouth the 17 July, 1748.—One of my hopes and wishes in time of war was for a better opportunity of shewing my gratitude for the millions of kind things you have done for me. Everett is this moment gone from me: his ship is not one of the paying off list, tho' probably he will fall when he comes back,

¹ He was made Rear-Admiral of the Red in 1747, and in 1748 Vice-Admiral of the White. A Vice-Admiral's half-pay was £1 5s. per day, his full pay £2 10s.



[From the portrait at Hagley by Richard Wilson.]

ADMIRAL SMITH.

for the Admiralty orders on that score are like death, which none escapes. Knowler is gone to pott already. All the ships which were cruising to the westward are ordered to be paid off to a man; am glad of it, because the lucky ones, Rodney, Coats, etc., had made interest for guard ships, which (my Lord Anson says) is the reason the order is so general: and that the Board intended to give them to those who had behaved well and no success.

. . . Lord Barrington promise fair to give me a ship when all this bustle is over. Some ships must be commissioned again, if they continue in their present resolves; and perhaps I may get one, tho' without a good station 'tis not worth my acception to except I do dirty work, which I pray God to keep me so disposed as not to begin now. But I have a scheme which I beg your opinion of. . . . I want a yatch; and the way to get at one of the river yatches, I think of going thro' the *Bolton* (Isle of Wight) yatch the Governor used to put the captain in; but on the decease of the last captain the Admiralty took her under their thumb and look upon her as one of the King's yatches. If so it will not be demeaning myself. The present captain is a young fellow and probably will like a sloop¹ better. She is worth £200 pr annum fairly. She is a pretty pleasure boat; but I must tell you I must get something, for my wife acts very indiscreetly and has got herself with child again.

I saw Dick Haddock yesterday. Mr. Harris will be here to morrow to pay his ship prize money; a rich little rogue; I am glad of it, for he is much like his father. . . .

Captain Richard Haddock, son of Admiral Nicholas Haddock, died 1750, much regretted by his brother officers.

In 1814 Lord Malmesbury describes the yacht

¹ Sloops were fast-sailing vessels, used against privateers and for the general policing of the seas.

then used by the Governor of the Isle of Wight, which was probably built on much the same lines as the one coveted by Captain Barker. "The *Medina* was the connecting link between the ships painted by Vandervelde and those which preceded ironclads. She was built in William III's reign, and cutter-rigged; her sides were elaborately gilded. She was highest by the stern, with such a deep waist forward as to endanger her going down head-foremost if she shipped a heavy sea. She had very little beam, and her complement consisted of the captain, the master, and twelve men. She measured 80 tons."

There are a few letters from John Amherst, who had been one of Smith's boys on the *Dursley*.¹ The first, dated April 7, 1738, was written to Roger Whitmore, a former shipmate. Amherst was twenty-one years old at the time; he seems to have been rather a rough diamond, but generous and spirited.

I cannot express the pleasure of my dear Hodge's letter gave me; for hearing of your recovery and preferment after what Langdon had told me, threw me into such transports of joye that my friends imagined I was mad. One askt if my wife was dead and had left me an estate, another if I had received a commission, and 20 trifling questions [compared] to my dear friend's welfare. . . . Yours from Portsmouth I received yesterday just as I was a setting out for Rochester to goe on board the *Chatham*, Captain Vanburgh. I have belonged to hir ever since she has been in commission. My leave for 10 days is expiered or you would have seen me by the reception of this. I have been thinking too ask leave, but then I know him to be so quer a mortal that he would not grant it, and if I was to take it he would discharge me, that I must much against my will

¹ John Amherst, 1717-78, son of Jeffrey Amherst of Riverhead, Kent.

comply with the old saying, "Patience per force." My service to Captain Smith and service to all my old ship mates.

Amherst probably had a difference with the "quer mortal," for a month later he tells Hodge that he had left the *Chatham* and was going out in the *Aulborough* to Admiral Haddock. The first letter to Smith preserved from him was written many years later from his father's house, Riverhead, in Kent, February, 1749/50. In this he tells of his domestic troubles, which he reproaches himself for not bearing with stoic calm. His wife was Anne, daughter of Thomas Linzee.

I thank you kindly for your invitation and should be glad to accept it, but she has involved me in some difficulties that will require my being in London a bout a month hence. It would be the greatest pleasure I could have to be with you at this time. It's with shame I own it, I want that peace of mind and fortitude that had hitherto carried me throw the world. Indeed I have not one thing to blame my self for; except it was a fault loveing hir to much. I thought my self retired with content, and tho' poor was happy, till it pleased God to bring this misfortune upon me; an affliction that I bear not as I ought to do, for I am not master of myself to follow what reason would dictate to me. You, dear Sir, I know can share a nother's misfortune, and will forgive the tenderness that nature has imposed upon me, not inclination. We are parted by articles, and I never will see hir more; and this you may depend on that I will have resolution to act with justice and honour to myself and the ungrateful woman.

I am promised, as I was before, the first guard ship; but if a voyage should offer, would rather be out of England than in it. The stations are at

present full, that it may be some time before I git any thing.

Amherst was at a loose end for a while before getting another ship. There is a letter from one R. Drakeford, an old naval friend of Smith's, who had asked if he would take Captain Amherst as what would now be called a paying guest; a personage who existed long before his name.

Gosport, Dec. 27, 1750.—I have your favour in regard to Captain Amherst, who as a friend of yours, and from the general good character he bears, I shall be glad of his company, provided he can dispence with the plain manner in which we live; a shoulder of mutton and bottle of humble port as usuall. As to terms I can make none, nor ever did give a bed in my house for money: but shall always esteem my self most happy if I can oblige you or any one you wish well to. But must observe that next summer I intend to decamp from this part of the world for Staffordshire, where I have for some time past been making me a warm house to end my days in; as I find nothing more is likely to be acquired from my length of service in the navall way; having had the misfortune to outlive all my friends in power. However, if Mr. Amherst likes the manner of living in my house till then, he shall be heartily welcome. . . .

Captain Drakeford was not to be pitied, as in another letter he says, "my ballance and property are considerable."

Not long afterwards this Amherst got a ship, but in spite of this piece of good fortune he wrote to Smith in a tone of studied misanthropy:

. . . I have just burnt Gayes Fables, for that of the hare should be out of print till better times. I care little for the world and less for the people that are in it, and would, if I could help it, not love

you. My ship I shall soon have ready for the sea, and suppose as soon as some damned voyage can be found for me, you will hear of my being at sea. I hope you will take care of your health, for if I should loose you, I shall loose my faith of there being one honest man in the world.

The cause of his bitterness appears in his next letter; he bursts out into a tirade against the tyranny and injustice of the Lords of the Admiralty and the way naval officers were treated. The "vile bill" he speaks of was one brought in under the direction of Lord Sandwich, President of the Admiralty, and Lord Anson, for the purpose of consolidating all the existing navy laws under one act. It was a sensible one in many ways, but among the new provisions was one which put officers on half-pay under martial law. This indignity raised a storm of fury in the Navy, and a petition against it was presented to Parliament by two Admirals, and signed by three others and forty-seven captains, none of them in Parliament. Many officers went to the Admiralty and threatened to throw up their commissions if the clause was passed. It was in the end dropped. From what Amherst says he was one of the protesting ones, and it was remembered against him, while the two other officers he mentions had held their tongues.

Gosport, May the 4th, 1751.—I am very much obliged to you for your kind offer of linnen and money; the first I had provided before I received the favour of yours, and have borrowed of my old friend Mr. Austin one hundred pounds, and have leave to draw for more on him when at Giberaltar, that I shall be able to bring my self home with the disadvantage to my self of increasing my debts greatly; but I am told the nation's debts will be decreased by these means, which to be sure, as a publick spirited

man, are more to me than my own. I shall begin to look on my self as a man of consequence, haveing already had the honour of being refused upwards of two hundred pounds, which was my due in the *Preston*; and am now to serve at sea without my servants, which will be 3/6 pr day loss to me. I will live hard and endeavour by all honest means to keep my self in the fleet I now am; but a few more of these things must arrest me out of a service I have no mind to quit.

For God sake why are we the only people pointed at? Is it we that have ruined the nation and run it in debt, that we are thus oppressed? No, these are the effects of the honest stand that was made against a vile bill, and am afraid we shall see prejudice sweep away our late good services. To me they would be extinct but for the flash of uniform and rank, and these I am not like to retain long; the first being now threadbare, and must soon, without money to purchase new, be so deformed as to extinguish the latter.¹ God help us, for our Lords seem to have little regard for us.

This service must be disagreeable to any one, but the good that would arise to the nation from it would induce one to serve chearfully, was it not for the hardships imposed upon us. They will not give me sea-men sufficient to navigate the ship with safety, and [I] may say we are the first ever sent to sea without their full pay. Edgcumbe² would not joyn with me; to him is given a broad pendant and 10/- a day for wearing it, that he is blind and dumb. Stanhope has money, loves it, but the promise or hopes of some thing better keeps him quiet, that I have no

¹ Uniforms in the Navy were only started in 1748 after the peace. George II saw the Duchess of Bedford, wife of the First Lord of the Admiralty, riding in the Park in a blue habit with white facings, and then and there decided such should be the colours of the naval uniform. At first it was appointed to be worn only by Admirals, Captains, Lieutenants and Midshipmen.

² Commodore Edgcumbe, afterwards first Earl of Mount Edgcumbe.

assistance from them. I am to compleat my number of soldiers here, and then joyn my commodore at Plymouth, and their stay till he embarks his; am then to go to Giberaltar, take in my complement, and remain in the bay until Mr. Edgcumbe returns from Minorca. Why this I know not, except for grandure and authority to the broad pendant; for the wind that carrys me to Plymouth would most likely clear me of the Channel; and should most likely git back from Giberaltar before he gits to Minorca, that what I could do in six weeks or two months shall be obliged to be on 5 or 6 months. But I am told to make no objection, so the Lords will be done.

Mr. Drakeford and the family are at high breakfast and desire to be kindly remembered to you. I am sincerely sorry at parting with them, for I never meet with more good nature and kindness than I have from them.

The soldiers inbark the seventh, that I expect to sail the first wind.

Two years later he wrote again from Plymouth Dock, having been home on leave and now about to set forth on another voyage. His letters give the impression of a somewhat fiery individual.

I love George Hamilton and should be sorry to give him any pain. The horse came to hand safe and sound, and if Hamilton has suffered any uneasiness from not knowing it, think it has proceeded from an inquietude of temper which I wish him to correct. As he heard no complaint he might have been content, and a little recollection of me would have shewn the true cause, a vile dislike to writing, which to have brought myself to would have given me more pain and trouble than I am sure he wishes me.

I am much obliged to you for your kind invitation and should with pleasure accept of it but for want of the finances. My ship has been in dock ever since I have had her and will not be out this month, that

I am afraid I shall not this year make boath ends meet, and must soon as I can live on board frugal, for fear of a transport trip. When I can afored it I will wait on you, and have a fat sister not far from you to see at the same time; her name is Thomas, lives at Notgrove near Northleach in Glocestershire.

Amherst's sister Elizabeth, wife of the Rev. John Thomas, rector of Notgrove, was, says Collins' *Peerage*, "celebrated for her poetical talents."

This voyage of Amherst's ended unfortunately. His ship, the *Mars*, two years later ran aground and was totally lost in Halifax harbour, for which Amherst was court-martialled but acquitted. He became Admiral of the White and died in 1778, while Commander-in-Chief at Plymouth.

The next letter comes from a wild young Irishman, one James O'Hara, who had evidently been one of Smith's boys; he writes to account for some misdoings that had come to the Admiral's ear.

Grampus : Greenock, July 25, 1750.—That I have been to blame in many things is most certain. Had I been possessed of less vivacity I had not been as faulty as I am; had I been without a fine voice, a social mirth, and a humour entertaining, which has made my company desired, and as vanity, till young folks begin to look into themselves, often carries them beyond those bounds which every wise man ought to place as the standard behaviour of his life, so may I in a dream, in a maze, and the wildness of youth, have swerved from that thought which might have made me more valuable had I made a fitter use of those qualifications which Heaven has given me. [He goes on to say that he has now changed] and for many months past my reformed behaviour promises fair that I am even making an effort to correct my nature. I stir not ashore, shall follow the latter part of your letter and am sensible of its contents.

You mistook me in regard to my Lord. I never ask any money of him. My letter to him was in fact thus. [He explains that he had heard] the Treasury intended to get an Irish wherry or a folkestone cutter on this station, and as the people employed here are of the country and do their duty in regard to the Crown but indifferently [against smugglers, etc.] a lieutenant in our service would command her. Upon this information I wrote to my Lord and he informs me he applied to Lord Sandwich for me, and had for answer that they did not intend employing any lieutenants on that footing, or any vessel but the sloops as they are established, that he approved of my plan and was my most obed^t and most humble servant. Believe me, dear Sir, I shall never ask money of him, for I know he has none.

The "my Lord" was doubtless Lord Tyrawly, whom he speaks of in another letter written three years later. In this the young sailor, after speaking of the "numberless obligations" he owed Smith, and his own bad health, fearing he had "an imposthume in my breast," adds: "I am shortly to be put in commission again, but Lord Anson told Lord Tyrawly I should go abroad, for I was too young a man to lie idle in a guardship."

James O'Hara, Lord Tyrawly, was a Field-Marshal, and at various times Ambassador and Governor in different parts of the world. "My Lord Tyrawly is come from Portugal and has brought three wives and fourteen children," wrote Walpole in 1745. Probably this sailor O'Hara was one of the fourteen. It is also likely he was the Captain O'Hara of the *Merlin* sloop of war who, in 1768, was stationed on the coast of Africa, and while surveying the coast of a small island in his tender, was enticed on shore by the natives, who murdered him and his boat's crew.

The next few letters give stray glimpses of life and doings in the Navy at that time. An officer on half-pay, Captain Michael Everitt, writes in August 1754 to say :

T'other day Commissioner Cooper called here in his way to Plymouth. He seems to take great notice of me and Bett, and is very fond of the children and has given us hopes that nothing shall be wanting on his part to do them or us service. He likewise tells me there is a scheme laid before the King and Council to augment the pay of all captains commanding from a fourth rate downwards to sixteen shillings per day, besides their servants; and those that commands sloops to have their pay advanced in proportion. If this should be the case it will be of some advantage to be employed.

In 1700, and for many years afterwards, the pay of a captain of a fourth-rate man-of-war was 10s. a day; of a first-rate £1, down to a sixth-rate at 6s. a day. Captain Everitt was killed "by a random shot" while commanding the *Ruby* in an engagement against the French in 1779.

It was not unusual for officers out of employment to enter the merchant service till such time as they could be employed again. Captain William Philipps¹ tells the Admiral of a stroke of luck.

Sepr. 3, 1752.—As I have so often troubled you with my misfortunes and have found all the relief in your power, so it would be the highest ingratitude not to acquaint you with the first change, being sensible that it will give you pleasure. By the assistance of my friends I have raised a subscription

¹ Captain William Philipps was a cousin of Sir John Philipps of Picton Castle, Pembroke, sixth Baronet, and grandfather of the eleventh Baronet.

and have purchased a snow¹ of 160 tons. The management of her in regard to freightage, etc., is left to Mr. Philipps, a brewer at Ratcliffe Cross, formerly master of a ship, a man of great character and interest among the merchants, and a particular friend of Sir John Philipps's. I am chartered to sail next week to Dublin, and shall go from thence to Barbadoes, or from Swansey to Barbadoes. If you have any commands to that Island I shall be glad to be honoured with them.

Captain Philipps went on to complain bitterly of his landlord's wife; during the hard times he probably had been somewhat remiss in paying his rent.

Mrs. Barker, that now is, has behaved very ill in every respect. To relate particulars would not only take up too much of your time but would scarcely be believed by any person, especially one who has so great a share of justice and humanity as yourself; and she carrying the fairest outside that ever woman did. Her acquaintance look upon her as not being capable of doing one wrong thing, but a very few months will shew her in her true colours. I can't help mentioning that she suffers me to go away without a coat to my back or a bed to lye on; neither am I certain whether I shall get either. . . . Direct to me at Henry Barker's, Esq. in James Street, near Buckingham Gate, Westminster.

There were certain perquisites and emoluments by which an officer, from the Admiral downwards, could honourably augment his pay; the question only was, where to draw the line. Lieutenant George Hamilton was in doubts as to this point, and after consulting

¹ "A snow is generally the largest of all two-masted vessels commanded by Europeans, and the most convenient for navigation."—Campbell's *Lives of the Admirals*.

Admiral Smith, writes in gratitude for his advice from Portsmouth, February 4, 1750 :

How happy do I think myself for having laid open the whole state of my affairs before you, who like a skilfull phisician have given me a regimen in which a strict perseverance will infallibly cure me. . . . The custom of passengers giving the Lieutenants a moydore ¹ is still in use, as the young gentleman who acts as lieut. on board tells me; but as he was employed on the duty of fetching money on board, he had all the advantages arising from it. But as I hope to be on good terms with Captain Proby, I make no doubt but I shall have my share of this duty, and we must likewise share the profits arising from this or any other perquisites the Captain may allow us on that account. I am glad to find a resolution I had taken with myself in regard to commissions has the sanction of your advice; it will make me set it down as sterling hereafter.

In Admiral Smith's correspondence there are letters which show that he was alive to the need of improving the conditions of life in the Navy, and that others shared his zeal. Captain Lucius O'Bryen writes in December 1755 from the *Colchester*, at sea off Beachy Head, of which he had just taken command. Smith was then Commander-in-Chief in the Downs.

As I have a particular pleasure in obliging all orders for his Majesty's service, especially those which tends so much to the welfare of our Royal Navy as your original order, I have therefore taken the liberty to trouble you with my scheme in compliance with your said order; by which you'll observe the 1st and 2nd lieuts. have four mids each, and the 3rd lieuts. 3 mids, and 12 men mostly, or at least as far as they

¹ Moidore, "a Portuguese coin rated at one pound seven shillings" (Johnson's Dictionary).

would go; and those divided into able, ordinary, and landsmen, equally as possible. The boatswain with his mates and forecastle-men, the gunner with his mates and crews, as also the carpenter and mate and crew; the purser for his guard, and even the surgeon for his folks; the master of arms, etc., in such manner that no one petty officer will have above 12 men under his care. And he'll not merit my notice and esteem that does not take care of his charge.

. . . I find the station has been chiefly off Beachy Head, and for fear of being with a strong westerly wind drove too soon under Dungeness, I propose to keep that station, unless I should have your orders to the contrary. Capt. Cornish will give you my weekly account, and let you know how ill provided some of the ships are left behind him. . . . I fear a supply will soon be wanted for the *Roebuck* and *Centaur*; if not provisions, water and firing the former is much in want of, and the latter is not overstocked . . . and by what I observe of the *Maryland Planter* she'll soon want cleaning. Pray, Sir, could not that ship clean (as it's at the owner's expence) at Dover, where she could revictual and water and come out again in 3 or 4 tydes?

Next comes a letter from Dr. James Lind, dated July 21, 1755, at Mr. Grose's, Apothecary, in Jermyn Street, near St. James' Street, begging leave

to fulfill my promise made at the Admiralty Office by sending you some small performances for the benefit of seamen. The contents are a book on the scurvy. There is also a paper, part of which I had the honour of transmitting to my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty before Admiral Watson sailed; and which I believe was approved of by their Lordships, and the Sick and Wounded Office, and sent to the Admiral, tho' I did not hear that his squadron was supplied with the medicines recommended. . . . As for some years I have made the diseases incident to

seamen my particular study, nothing would give me greater pleasure than to find that my poor labours are approved of by the proper judges, particularly one who is singularly distinguished for a patron to the sea service and the greatest humanity towards seamen. . . . As I am not acquainted with who may be your surgeon, may I humbly beg that if any of the methods recommended meet with your approbation and are put into practice, he would favour me with an account of the effects; as I intend to publish soon, and could wish to recommend nothing in so delicate and important an affair as that which relates to the health of seamen but what will stand the test of repeated experience. . . .

Dr. Lind had been a surgeon in the Navy, and served in different parts of the world. He subsequently devoted himself to discovering methods for improving the health of seamen, particularly in regard to scurvy, which at that time ravaged ships. In the squadron that went with Anson round the world 75 per cent. of the crews died of it. Lind was at that time "the only person who can be said to have laboured strenuously or successfully in the prophylactic part of medicine for the benefit of H.M. Navy in particular." Like most pioneers, Lind spoke to deaf ears. It was not till 1795 that the Admiralty issued an order to supply juice of lemons to the Navy; forty years after Lind recommended it, and two hundred years after its value as a remedy for scurvy had first been discovered.

Another paper from Dr. Lind begins with a dissertation on the value of a vegetable diet as compared with a "full flesh diet and gross malt liquors."

Captain Palliser when bound to the East Indies in the last war, acquainted his ship's company that as in all probability they might have a long passage and

be sickly, he thought the best way to prevent the latter was to eat as little salt provisions as possible. They were accordingly served flesh twice a week only, instead of four days as usual. The consequence was he arrived at the Cape of Good Hope without having one man sick. But upon another occasion when returning from India on a short run to the Cape of Good Hope, expecting to be supplied there with all manner of necessaries, he put his ship's company upon whole allowance of beef and pork; the effect of which was that he brought into the Cape 70 of his men, in a 20 gun ship, overrun with scurvies, afflicted with fluxes, fevers, etc.

According to the regulations for the sick in the French fleet, every squadron consisting of such a number of ships (the number I do not remember, not having the paper with me) is allowed a tender to carry the necessaries for the sick. The principal articles are live stock, fresh bread, wines, etc. The fresh meat must needs be of great service to the sick; yet the quantity is more indispensably necessary in the French service than in ours, as we do not in our practice allow the sick flesh soops in fevers and other acute distempers, which the French practitioners do. But the last article, that of wine, is of great importance; we find it, in most fevers towards their decline, to exceed greatly the richest spirituous shop cordials, as being more grateful at that season both to the taste and stomach of the patient; and when the fever is entirely gone it proves the best and quickest restorative at sea. Whereas rum or other spirits, in whatever manner diluted or acidulated, does not produce the like effects. Before the Madeira wine is quite expended, some casks [of it] preserved for the use of the sick and given to them by the surgeon in lieu of rum, would answer the purpose. . . .

Dr. Lind also suggested that some casks of Dutch salted cabbage and small pickled onions might be shipped, "to make a vegetable soup."

It has always hitherto been the aim of those who have made the diseases of seamen their study, to find out a proper and agreeable acid, which the sailors might be induced to use, plentifully, as the best preservative against many of their diseases, which are chiefly of a putrid nature. Hence vinegar, elixir of vitriol, etc., have been recommended to the fleet and have had due effects in proper circumstances. Cream of tartar has the advantage of being not only equally agreeable to juice of lemon, and wholesome for the use of sailors, but also it is the cheapest acid that can be contrived for the purpose; two pounds a year being sufficient for the use of each man, and it will cost, I think, about sixpence a pound. . . . It will be sufficient over night to put into a hogshead of water intended to be mixed with the rum served next day, 16 ounces or a pound avoirdupois weight, of powdered cream, (more indeed may be used) shaking the cask a little both at night and in the morning when it is served. If the seamen can be prevailed to exchange part of their salt provisions with the purser for sugar, they will then have excellent punch served them every day, which is a most salutary liquor for a hard working man in that climate.

[Dr. Lind also suggested that] If His Majesty's ships were supplied with a proper quantity of Jesuit bark,¹ and this infused in a cask of Madeira wine or brandy—the addition of which might make it an agreeable, palatable bitter for the seamen—and the men allowed a glass of it in a morning fasting, upon the first appearance of sickness in the ship, it might prove effectual for preventing the fever. It is also to be remarked that those who can be persuaded to use the cold bath with discretion, in the cool of the morning and upon an empty stomach, will not be so liable to the attack of these diseases as others, unless they catch them by infection. . . . Which would now

¹ Quinine, then called Jesuit bark, because it was brought over from South America by Jesuit missionaries, who discovered its healing properties from the natives.

lead me to the methods of preventing the contagion from spreading, but I am afraid to have been already too tedious; so shall only say—that a free open berth, a constant circulation of fresh air, and not warmth, is wanted. Ventilators cannot fail of being of great use, as also vinegar for washing the hands, feet, linens, and utensils of the sick; and proper fumigations and steams for purifying the air, beds, and timbers, in the sick apartment; for which the burning of gun powder answers as well, if not better, than any other. Upon this occasion the nurses especially ought to use the bark bitter wine. Tho' the scurvy is not a disease so usual in hot as in cold climates, yet there are instances of its committing great havock also in the West Indies; as witness Admiral Hozier's fleet, who owed their entire destruction to this calamity.

Admiral Hozier and four thousand men died of scurvy off Portobello in the expedition against Spain in South America in 1727. Glover's poem, "Hozier's Ghost," commemorates this tragedy, which was equalled if not surpassed by Vernon's expedition there in 1740, when thousands died of yellow fever. Vernon, however, brought about one reform during this expedition, which had very beneficial results.

The daily ration of drink in the Navy at that time was—a gallon of beer in home stations, a quart of "beverage" wine in the Mediterranean and off Portugal, and, in the West and East Indies, half a pint of spirits. Vernon, seeing the disastrous effect of neat spirits on the men, issued an order that henceforth the half pint of rum should be mixed with a quart of water. The men grumbled at first, and called the new ration "Grog" (the Admiral's nickname in the Navy, owing to his wearing a program cloak), but its benefits were soon realized, and before long grog everywhere took the place of neat spirits.

For the prevention of plague some measures were taken. Samuel Hood ¹ writes from Portsmouth in 1754 :

The report about the plague being upon the mother bank has not been without foundation. A ship from Algiers put into Guernsey, the master, etc., belonging to which immediately went on shore; but as soon as the proper officers were acquainted from whence she came, [they] ordered the people on board and the ship to perform quarantine. In the following night the master put to sea and touched at Weymouth, where they were not admitted: and then they came to Spithead and was immediately ordered upon the mother bank, with the Custom House vessels to take care of her till such time as Mr. Brooke had an answer from London. A man of war was then ordered to watch her, and in two or three days afterwards she was ordered to be sunk in the middle of the Channel, which Loyd of the *Arundel* saw done last week. All the people were well on board, and continued so the whole time of their being here; but as she was loaded with cotton, the Government thought it right, which every one approves of hereabouts, to sink her. The owners are paid 3000 pounds for ship and cargo, and the master and crew are entirely new cloathed by order of the Government: they being taken off of their own ship, naked, into a little one appointed to receive them, in which they are now on the mother bank, performing quarantine.

Admiral Smith had made enough money to keep him in comfort through the eight years he was on half-pay, notwithstanding his open-handed method of spending it. Dr. Ayscough always managed his business affairs, and Camelford tells how Smith, having some money in hand, one day asked him to

¹ Afterwards first Lord Hood. He had entered the Navy as one of Smith's boys.

find him a good investment. Ayscough went and made inquiries in the City and announced that he had found "the best opportunity in the world." "Ay," replied Smith, "but I have found a better, for I have given it all away this morning."

He bought a house at Hagley, where his hospitality was unbounded, and he radiated kindness and jollity through all the countryside. After he went to take command in the Downs, the denizen of a neighbouring village wrote to assure him that "Pedmore is scarce Pedmore without you"; and Lady Stamford,¹ sending Dean Lyttelton the compliments of the season from Enville one New Year's Eve, adds, "I am sorry you are not with us to night to receive them with a cup of Rhamboose. The honest Admiral is here for that purpose, and that must excuse this hasty incorrect letter, for I am loath to loose any of his good company."

No doubt the "Rhamboose" had been supplied with the assistance of the Admiral. One of the privileges of the officers of His Majesty's Navy was to get their wines shipped in men-of-war, thus obtaining them in a far easier and cheaper way than through the ordinary trade channels. In this way Admiral Smith supplied many friends; his brothers, Lord Stamford, and the Bishop of Worcester among others. There are some letters from Samuel Hood, who, then on half-pay, acted as his agent. In January 1754 he writes from Portsmouth: "I am just returned from tasting your wine at the Custom House, which they tell me is very good." Three days later he inquires:

How does my dear Admiral propose to have his Madeira to Hagley? Because if it goes by way of London or within twenty miles, it will be liable to be

¹ Wife of the fourth Earl of Stamford. Enville is nine miles from Hagley.

stopt and forfeited, (notwithstanding the original duty is paid) unless I pay the London duty, which is four pound per ton. It took place last year, but all wines that were carried to London were liable to this duty before; but in order to save it it was landed near London, such as Vauxhall, etc., and carried by water, because it should not go through the City. Now in order to put a stop to that method, it is enacted that whatever wine is stopt within twenty miles of London, the London duty not paid, shall be forfeited in the same manner as if no duty at all was paid. Your wine is good. I have paid the old duty which is £10-3-9½. It is cased up, for which I paid 17 shillings, so that it cannot be spoiled or get any damage by lying in the warehouse.

Another time he tells of a disastrous episode, having heard that

The officers of the Customs had taken out of the *St. Albans*, upon her leaving Spithead, several casks of rum, which the master had owned and were to be had again on paying duty, and that one was allotted for you. I have since been to the Custom House in order to pay the duty, and find that it was taken out as a seizure, and not to be had on paying duty, it being ordered to be condemned. It was first in a pipe or puncheon, and drawn off in a small cask for the conveniency of running; part of which they had run, which the officers were informed of, and therefore made no ceremony of taking the rest.

One Mr. Griffith, writing from the Navy Office about wine to be delivered to various people in the Admiral's neighbourhood, says :

The money disbursed for duty is £47-4-0, the receipts and particulars of which I send enclosed to Sir G. Lyttelton to avoid the expence of postage to you, having never a frank by me; and our board have lately been upon savings and deprived us of the

only privilege we had in paying a few letters from ourselves, and have restrained the postage of letters inwards, excepting single letters to us. If you approve of it I will on future occasions direct to Sir Geo: Lyttelton (as is done by other members) and put an S. under the seal of the letter, which will be a sufficient guidance for whom they are.

Letters at that time were paid for by the recipient, except in the case of members of both houses of Parliament and a few others who were privileged both to send and receive them free of charge.

During his time on shore Admiral Smith busied himself in many ways. Once when a Parliamentary commission was being held to inquire into the traffic in gin, he drew up some suggestions for the best way to stop it. Though he never stood for Parliament, he took great interest in elections and had votes in various parts of the country. One John Masters, writing to Dr. Ayscough from Poole in February 1750, says: "I hope our worthy good friend the Admiral enjoys perfect health at Hagley. We are watching, and could venture to say praying too, for an opportunity to shew him how much we have at heart his good success in this b[oroug]h, tho' for some reasons we don't at present think it proper to make it known."

In the General Election of 1754 Richard Lyttelton came in for Poole, perhaps through Smith's influence.

Early in 1754 Thomas Pitt, having heard that "there is no room to hope" for Smith's presence in Cornwall at the coming election, says: "If that is the case I must desire you will be so good as to give me leave to cancell the deeds made to you for conveying lands at Old Sarum, in order to the substituting some person in your stead to whom to convey those lands."

There is a quaint letter from the Admiral to Nigel Gresley, one of his "boys," who had consulted him on a knotty point concerning his own vote. Mr. Gresley's brother, Sir Thomas,¹ was standing for Lichfield against Mr. Anson, brother of Admiral Lord Anson, then First Commissioner of the Admiralty. Poor Nigel was therefore in a quandary as to which of the two he should vote for, but Admiral Smith was able to suggest a way out. There is no date or address.

DEAR NIGEL,

As I understand there is like to be an opposition at Litchfield, and that your brother is to be one of the candidates, I can't forbear writing this to tell you that it behoves you greatly, both in honour and interest, to vote in such a manner as will be most agreeable to Lord Anson. I say in honour, because you were not made a lieutenant by him in stipulation for your vote, but as a young gentleman recommended by me to him and his brother; who had voted for him and for whose behaviour I would be answerable as an officer and a gentleman. Nor did his intentions to serve you cease; for you know he told me he designed to send you with the first commanding officer that went abroad, which was intending every thing in his power to promote you early. . . . He, as first Commissioner of the Admiralty, has it more in his power to hurt or to help you than any man in England; and I, who know how small your fortune is at present, and how precarious any great addition to it is from any other source but your profession, must as a friend insist that as a man, a father, and a husband, you ought to continue to follow that, and use all means consistent with honour to advance yourself in it.

Remember the words of the Apostle—*He that takes*

¹ Sir Thomas Gresley died November 1753, and was succeeded by his brother Nigel, who died 1787.

*not care of his family is worse than an infidel.*¹ It is, you know, far from my nature to make ill blood between man and man, and I am sure it would grieve me much to make any between brothers; but if your brother insists on such a proof of your love as your voting for him at this time, so diametrically opposite to your honour and interest, you ought to suspect that either his head is very wrong or that his heart is not much attached to you, and insist on being excused. Lord Litchfield, when one of the leaders of the Opposition to Sir Robert Walpole, was so warm in the interest of his brother that he stole by night to Sir Robert and desired him to make his brother (who was afterwards Admiral Lee) a captain; and this surely was a much greater favour done to his younger brother than what I desire your brother to do for you. . . .

I mean by all I have said to prevail on you, by all the ties above mentioned, to keep the burgage tenure in your own hands and give both your votes in favour of Mr. Anson, (for men will not be served by halves) notwithstanding your brother is a candidate in opposition to him. But if after all you will not follow this advice, I must in the next place advise you to part with it; and if that is your resolution, copy the letter I enclose in this and direct it to me, and I will contrive to set the matter in the best light to Lord Anson. . . .

The letter to be copied went over all the points of "honour, gratitude, and interest" which led Mr. Gresley to wish to vote for Mr. Anson, yet as "the nature of human kind is such that the major part of those who hear of my voting so will call me unnatural for voting against my brother and attribute my so doing to interest only," Mr. Gresley thought it advisable to sell his burgage tenure to "any one that may

¹ "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."—1 Timothy v. 8.

be depended on to vote for Mr. Anson," which would "serve him and at the same time keep me clear from those aspersions, which, tho' idle, are yet such as I would gladly be free from."

Admiral Smith's most distinguished civilian protégé was Richard Wilson, afterwards the great landscape painter. It is not known how they first made acquaintance, but Smith's portrait at Hagley is signed and dated "Richard Wilson Jr., 1744," long before the painter made his name. There are only two letters which tell of his friendship with Smith. The first is from his sister, Miss E. Wilson, who pours out a grievous tale; the Mr. Harris she mentions, to whom Smith had evidently introduced the artist, was an official in the Navy Office :

Bristol, Nov. 7, 1750.—It is as unwelcome a task to me to be troublesome to you as any thing that can happen to me in this world; which has occasioned me being a good while sumoning up courage enough to write to you; not from any fear of your not caring to help me out of a difficulty, for those are acts I know that give you pleasure; but because I am very sensible that so good a friend as you are ought to have some respite.

What I am about to trouble you in, Admiral, my brother nor I have had an opportunity to lay fully before you; I mean the affair between Mr. Harris and my brother concerning the pictures of the two Miss Jenkins. The last time I was at the Doctor's [Ayscough]¹ I brought with me the letters my brother received from Mr. Harris upon that account; for he has not seen Mr. Harris since the middle of June, nor could he be prevailed upon to come to the house ever since the pictures were finished: which looked but

¹ Dr. Ayscough was also an early patron, and it was probably through him that Wilson came to know Smith, as, from a remark in his sister's letter, they were friends of other members of Ayscough's family.

too like that what he had bespoke in one humour he might have objections to in another.

Only that I fear detaining you or I think I could convince you, Admiral, that my brother offered and did every thing to endeavour to please him that was in the power of a man; both on account of his belonging to you, and that it was his interest to oblige every one. It was all lost upon him. He was outrageous to the greatest degree. He swore my brother had changed your picture that was took home to be amended. He went to several houses (some where they had never heard of my brother), one a particular friend's, when he endeavoured to do him a great deal of mischief; adding he would never pay for Miss Jenkins' pictures unless you insisted upon it, and called my brother more bad names than one would think could come out of the mouth of a gentleman.

All this I assure you upon my word is strictly true, and I do imagine you will think it a hard case, especially as it is an oppression from a man of fortune to an artist, whose time is his patrimony and whose good name is of consequence to him. I have troubled you with this detail to shew you that no friend can be lost in Mr. Harris, let me do what I will in it; and if I had your leave or (which I had rather) that you advise me to it, I will order them to be packed up and sent to him. I believe that custom in these cases goes no further than that if a gentleman pays half down for what he bespeaks, he is at liberty then either to take or leave the performance. But be that as it will, Sir, I submit it entirely to you; only begging the favour of you to call at the woolen draper's next door but one where we did live, and look at them; which was what my brother begged a long while of Mr. Harris to do, assuring him of his readiness to do any thing to them that was found necessary, either then or if it were seven years hence. I am quite ashamed to have taken up so much of your time, which indeed, Admiral, is owing to a greater necessity than I should care Mr. Harris knew belonged to either

my brother or I. I am with unspeakable gratitude and esteem, Sir,

Your ever obliged and most obedient servant,

E. WILSON.

No doubt the Admiral settled the dispute to the satisfaction of all concerned. Harris seems to have been in the wrong, but perhaps he had been annoyed by the artist, whose unconciliatory temper helped in after years to keep him from prosperity. Wilson lost the favour of George III by losing his temper. He painted a view of Sion House, which he submitted to Lord Bute, who objected to the sixty guineas Wilson asked for it. Wilson retorted that if his Majesty could not pay it all at once he might do it by instalments. His behaviour to Harris was likely to have been at least as cavalier as the way he treated King George.

At the time his sister wrote Wilson had gone to Italy, chiefly, if not entirely, it would seem from his letter, at the Admiral's expense. He writes from Venice, July 8, 1751 :

HON^D SIR,

I have by me a letter that I did myself the honour to write to Admiral Smith above four months agoe, which I deferred sending until I had something more worth your reading to inform you of; which has been deferred from one post to another that I really grew ashamed of writing to him that had the greatest title to my gratitude of any man breathing.

I came to Venice about 8 months agoe, where I met with the encouragement I mentioned in my letter to Dr. Ayscough; and here I have studied Titian as much as ever I could, which I hope to shew you the effects of in my future productions. I am doing a portrait for the German Ambassador among other things. What tells better for my private

satisfaction is that Signor Zucarelli,¹ a famous painter of this place, made me an offer of his painting me a picture for a portrait of himself; which I am doing with great pleasure. I have great reason to condole the great loss we have lately sustained :² but there is the same God tho' not the same Prince, who will protect you and my good friend from the vicissitudes of this life.

I can give you very little news from hence. We have had but a very poor shew here at the Ascension, the prince being ill during the time of his wedding. The company here is my Lord Poulteney, Sir Matt: Featherstone, Sir William Lowther, and Mr. Aldridge. Mr. Smith (blessed be the name) our Consul here is exceedingly kind to me; he is a very great virtuoso.³ Among other things he has got me the painting of Mr. Sackville, which he is to send to my Lord Middlesex; which I hope will do me much honour.

Good Admiral, I never wrote to you without asking some favour of you; the business of this is to let Mr. Travers send me a good account of your health and happiness, which I shall look at with more pleasure than the first picture of Michael Angelo could give to your ever obliged humble servant,

RICH^d WILSON.

When Mr. Pelham died in 1754, various changes took place in the Government offices high and low. Among the aspirants in the second category was Mr. Walter Harris; the piteous letters he wrote to Admiral Smith would have pleased the artist, and still more his

¹ It was Zucarelli who persuaded Wilson to give up portrait for landscape painting.

² The death of Frederic Prince of Wales.

³ Joseph Smith, Consul for many years at Venice, was a great collector of books, pictures and coins; but in this he had his limitations. Walpole says he knew nothing of his books but their title-pages, and as a patron of art he was not very nice. He engaged Canaletto for years to paint for him alone, at a fixed price, and sold the pictures afterwards to English visitors at a profit.

sister, could they have read them. Harris had written to Lord Temple¹ upon hearing that "there is upon the tapis somewhat in motion very interesting to your brother of the Treasury," and he begged for Lord Temple's recommendation to some one of the employments Mr. Grenville might have it in his power to bestow. Temple replied civilly that nothing was as yet settled, so that he could say no more than that both his brother and himself would be pleased "to find ourselves in a capacity of serving you." George Grenville was made Treasurer of the Navy, and Mr. Harris went through many hopes and fears, writing to Smith in March 1754 :

Pardon, I pray, the senseless incorrect scrole I could not help sending you on Tuesday night, when my mind was under a variety of tortures, and chiefly from the reiterated soft speeches of Mr. Grenville in the morning, importing frequently his great inclination and desire of serving me. . . . What I really mean by soft speeches, pardon I intreat the expression, is that they were so mild and friendly as portended sometimes a favourable result. . . . Yet there was such a mixture of denial with all this as made my situation extreamly uneasy. When I was ruminating with myself especially of the despicable appearance I must make before Lord Anson, unto whom indeed I had once desired Mr. Grenville's favourable interposition, when afterwards his Lordship, before his brother Anson, told me in a voice the most friendly, that I need not have given any trouble to friends, for had he known sooner my desire he might have found means of serving me. What now, my dear Sir, must his Lordship think, knowing there are two certain employments in the immediate gift of the Treasurer and that I am to fail in both ?

¹ Richard Grenville succeeded his uncle as Viscount Cobham in 1749, and later became Earl Temple on the death of his mother, who had been made a countess in her own right.

He had a further interview with Temple, who “ kept me near an hour in a discourse the most pressing, to convince me, as his Lordship was pleased often to say, that tho’ for different reasons I might not succeed in any one of the present gifts, I might depend upon their good inclination. But, alas ! I am growing old, and will therefore submit this whole affair to your worthy, candid consideration.”

The reason why Mr. Harris was denied with so much softness becomes plain in his next letter. A General Election was imminent and he possessed six votes. He fully realised the position and wrote in much bitterness of spirit :

Croydon, March 20, 1754.—I had told you of Mr. Haddock’s *swimming* success at Rochester immediately after his election. . . . In the next event few or none, I believe, can pretend to be answerable, unless the dead was to rise, which, [being] in a state wee should presume of the utmost felicity, would be a pitty. . . . There portends much division in Kent; and like unto a parcel of unseasonable pack’t currs indeed wee are become, boundless beyond measure. Each at most pretending to bellow out that Providence hath interposed for *conscience*. But what will that, with all the philosophical mathematicks, avail against *policy*? Poor wretched voters ! The drudge of people’s playgame and fallacy ; daily receiving billets of honour to be acknowledged,—untill a short, very short, space of time indeed shall erase all from the receiver’s remembrance. And yet in the number of half a dozen votes I have of my own to give, I would gladly have trusted one to my most dear Admiral Smith. But boundless of your kindnesses and friendship to mankind, you are resolved to banish yourself from the least return.

Admiral Smith was made Commander-in-Chief in the Downs in August 1755. A curious state of affairs

existed at this time between England and France. Officially at peace since 1748, each country tacitly agreed that it only held good on the continent of Europe. In India and America skirmishing never ceased, while after the first few years England's policy on the high seas was to "annoy" the French by seizing her ships, and the French retaliated.¹ Smith on taking command received orders from the Admiralty as to how to proceed in this delicate situation, and sent a letter to the officials of the Navy Office, Messrs. Walter Harris and Tyringham Stephens :

Ramillies in the Downs, 14 September, 1755.—The Right Honble the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, having been pleased to direct by their orders of the 27th August, 1755, that all French vessels or ships that shall be seized or taken by virtue of the said order, should be sent into some convenient port in his Majesty's dominions, to be kept there without embezzlement or pretence of embezzlement . . . and that the French master of every such French ship with any two of his people that he should chuse, should be left on board her, the better to prevent any embezzlement or pretence of embezzlement. And whereas several French ships and vessels have already been sent into the river Medway, I desire you will take them and such as may hereafter be sent to those places under your care . . . and take such measures as shall appear to you most proper to prevent any embezzlement, etc. To which and to be a cheque on the French masters and their men, you may provide and hire two proper shipkeepers for each ship or vessel, to be aiding, relieving, and assisting each other, in case ye shall find the same to be absolutely necessary, but not otherways.

In spite of these precautions errors crept in.

¹ Lord Granville was the only statesman who protested against this policy, which he said was "vexing our enemies for a little muck."

There is a letter addressed to "Thomas Smith, Esq., Vice-Admiral of the White and Commander-in-Chief in the Downs," docketed "Capt. Lecomte—complaint of embezzlement." Captain Lecomte's writing is rather difficult to make out, but after assuring "Monseigneur l'amiral" that "l'honneur et le respecte mangage a vous trasser ces lignes pour vous assurer de mais trais humbles respectes," he unfolds his tale of woe; how his boy has been robbed of

Trois chemise, plusieurs culottes de drap, quatre pere de bas, un bon pere de souliers, deux bonnetes, une camisolle, et un juillet de toile bleue; étant prise de la frigade nomme *Letrouve*. On ma my six hommes a bord de moy, qui est le navire nommé le *Duc de Pentière*. Il ont couché plusieurs a bord de moy. Une nuit estant dans le port de Douvre, là ou il ont venue [illegible] et il ont fait tapage de diable. Cette même nuit il ont desseué (?) le coffre and en lancé ce qui est expliqué . . . surtout un Garnezay.

CHAPTER V

CAPTAIN MIDWINTER

THERE are but slender traces of romance in what remains of Admiral Smith's correspondence. He never married, but there is one allusion to a son and another letter mentions "your dear Mrs. W——t." The story of his friendship with Captain Midwinter leads up to what may be termed an autumnal romance.

Captain John Midwinter, or "Captain Jack" as he was sometimes called, had served under Smith in the *Dursley*, but he is seldom mentioned before the year 1751. He was then on half-pay, with perhaps a certain sum in prize-money laid away, while his wife seems to have had property in Jamaica. From his first letter, written from Mile End Green, then a suburb of London, it appears that Captain Jack and his "little woman" were wishing to change their abode, but were uncertain where to settle, both Dr. Ayscough and Admiral Smith wanting them as neighbours. Though the sea is scarcely mentioned, the letters seem to bring before one a bluff sea captain of the old school.

Mile End Green, May 2, 1751.—Doctor Ayscough sets out for Hertfordshire to-morrow, where he tells me is a pretty tenement to be let and in his neighbourhood. He seems very desirous of my going down with him, but for my part think its to near London. . . . I have no ocation to tell you how much I would rather be in your neighbourhood, and in a place of your fixing; so must beg you'll look out for me, as I have

gave up all thoughts of staying another winter in this place, unless its your positive orders to the contrary. My little woman joyns in sincere wishes for a continuance of your health, and I am, dear Sir, etc.

Four days later Midwinter wrote :

Hope to have your sailing orders soon, as I have nought to do but put my foot in the stirrup, being provided with a riding horse as well as Jack now. Should not have aded a horse had I not been determined upon a country life, and don't suppose there's any such thing as doing there without them. . . . It has cost me one shilling and two pence this day for letters. Pray, dear Sir, when you do me the favour of writing, inclose me a frank to send your answer in, or put it in my power to write to some one of my brother sufferers without putting them to any expence. You'll excuse this freedom and believe me to be, etc. Affairs between my wife and I are settled, and shall send the papers by the first ship to Jamaica.

Meanwhile Dr. Ayscough was singing the charms of the house in Hertfordshire, in which he wished to share, though his needs were limited to "a parlour called a studdy" and the wine vault; a conjunction which makes one wonder how much the "studdy" would be used as such. Captain Midwinter relied with childlike simplicity on his superior officer's judgment; merely repeating Dr. Ayscough's arguments and leaving the decision in the Admiral's hands.

Mile End Green, Monday the 13th of May, 1751.—The Doctor is come to town from Hertfordshire, and give a very pretty account of the house he mentioned to me, but says he want a parlour called a studdy for his [illegible] and the wine vault; however, have no great objection to that as theirs room anough for my

family without them. The rent is but trifelling, as he proposes paying four pounds a year for the above; so that their will remain fourteen pounds for me to pay. He insists upon my going down to see it, which I propose doing some time next week; and then when mounted, if its agreeable to you will go on to Worcestershire. I told the doctor you had a house in your eye for me; the only thing in the world that would suit me. . . .

He seems to think it a bad skeem my going into your part of the country, as its neighther cheip nor pleasant, and it will cost me a great deal of money moving my good so far. Nevertheless all that I don't mind if its agreeable to you, well knowing you'll not suffer me to do a thing of this sort without first considering the consequences that will attend it. He says should an accident happen in your family,¹ you'll immediately come up to him in Hertfordshire, and then should I be fixed in Worcestershire I shall intirely lose the pleasure of seeing you, or at most not above once in two years. It has cost me a great deal of money fixing here, thats certain, and when I do move hope it will be for life, or till my affairs alter in one shape or another. Beg I may have your sailing orders before I set out, which will be very acceptable to, Sir, etc.

The sailing orders duly came; Captain Midwinter rode down to Hagley and before long all was settled. The Admiral wished the Midwinters to set up with him in a house he was rebuilding there, they bringing their own furniture. Some other business transactions there were, for at the end of one letter Midwinter signed a receipt for £600 from Smith,—“being agreeable to a contract made between the said Admiral and me, the eighth day of June, 1751.” From another letter it would seem that Rockingham was in some

¹ Meaning the death of Sir Thomas, which in fact took place this year.

way settled on Midwinter for his life, but there are no clear details as to this. Smith wrote to tell Mrs. Midwinter of the proposed plan and asked her forgiveness for keeping her husband so long. She replied on June 3 :

I do assure you of my pardon for keeping my good man, and think my self extreamly obliged to you for all the kindness you have been pleased to shew him. You tell me he has procured a very pretty place, (but, Sir, let me tell you 'tis not the place alone, but the being with his kind benefactor that gives me the greatest pleasure) and shall be very glad when we get there. I hope you will make it agreeable to your self, and I am sure it will be so to me; and this I will promise my dear Admiral, that I'll study all I can to make our lives happy whilst we are together. Dear Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

DOROTHY MIDWINTER.

Admiral Smith proposed to lay out three or four hundred pounds upon his house and buildings; he sought the advice of Sanderson Miller, the amateur architect, who rebuilt the hospitable sailor's mansion in the melancholy Gothic style then so much admired. Rockingham Hall still stands, cased in stucco, with its little Gothic lodge at the gate; but the roomy stables and outhouses in mellow red brick round a spacious yard seem far more appropriate to the warm-hearted Admiral, and only there is it easy to picture the comings and goings of his friends and all the stir and bustle of his open house.

Captain Midwinter went back to London hoping to sell his house at once and return to Hagley. On July 13 he wrote to announce good news :

I have one hundred and twenty gallons of rum arrived safe in the river, and will be landed soon; beg you'll

let me know in what manner it must be sent down to prevent its being a dulterated. Have wrote to Oporto for another hogshead of wine, and this I have already shall come down with the rum to be layd in by way of store, as both these commoditys are the better for keeping.

The news of the rum's arrival made the Admiral write hastily to advise caution in the distribution of it, and in his next letter Captain Jack says, "You may depend upon my not giving any part of the rum away," adding darkly, "I think I have seen enough of that." Before he left London, Midwinter was hoping to be made a post-captain; he tells Smith on June 29 :

I have been to wait upon Mr. George Grenville before he set out for the country, and moved my affair of post to him. He has assured me of his good intentions to serve me and has directed me to wait upon Lord Anson, and in case he gives the least incouragement, will push it with all his forces; asked me when I had seen you, was vastly pleased to find you was in a good state of health. . . . We taulked a little about your son; both shed a few tears, and parted with his desiring to know where I lived that he might wait upon me. Pray, Sir, give me directions how you'd have me proceed in this affair, as you very well know how I stand with him.

A month later he writes in high satisfaction, having lately been three day very agreeably entertained at Wooten by Mr. George Grenville and lady, and agreeable to your directions told upon what footing I was going to Hagley; all which he seemed vastly pleased with, and comes to town this day in order to push my affair with Lord Anson, Lord Barrington, and Mr. Boscawen. . . . This journey I undertook from the encouragement I met with from Lord Anson a Tuesday

last, he having said every thing except it shall be done. . . . If I am so happy as to get my self fixed upon the post list, I don't see any thing can hinder my leaving my house next quarter day, as I have acquired a man to enter upon the thing directly. As soon as Jack's recovered of his journey shall send him down to the team.

If we can't have a lodging at Hagley, have some thoughts of being in Worcester this winter, and then I shall be within four hours ride of my friends at Hagley. Pray inquire about a place for us at that city; my little woman's terified at the thoughts of staying another winter here. She hears by Knight your constantly attending the building, and begs for Gods sake you'll take care not to hurt your health, as she thinks after these great rains the airs very damp. Pray send me the size you'd have the two glasses in the best room and I will look out for two fine ones. The glass I have in my best parlour will do for the common room at Hagley, and this I have in my little parlour, as its a mohogony frame, will make a fine dressing glass for the best bed chamber.

Captain Midwinter evidently got himself "fixed upon the post list," as the next letter tells of his safe arrival in Worcester with his wife; one of the Hood brothers, probably Alexander, bore them company.

After following your directions in every particular except taking the sow guilder for a guide, as Mr. Hathway had promised to perform that office, we are safe arrived at our lodgings in Worcester. . . . My little woman's in good spirits and desires her compliments, and at the same time would be glad if you could contrive to send her by the Stourbridge carrier to this place, half a douzen table cloths and twice as many napkins, as we find great deficulty in getting supplied with them here as we propose dressing our food at home. Hoods in fine spirits and make no doubt of spending six weeks or two months very

agreeably with the help of a letter from you once a week. . . . Am sorry to find the building goes on so slow, and as far as I can hear its Cardel's¹ fault, he having desired the workmen to do as they should do, out of peek to him they will do nothing at all; but hope you will put them all to rights again and that I shall have the pleasure to find all roofed in.

Captain Midwinter was to have little or no enjoyment of the house he had so much looked forward to sharing with his friend. Early in February 1752 he wrote from London :

I find by the cittuation of my affairs that my presents is necessary at Jamaica, and having a good opportunity of going have determined upon setting out, and propose being back in August next, if it please God to spare my life. If you'd have me do any thing in regard to delivering up the estate to Sir George, pray let me know by return of post and you'll much oblige, Sir, etc.

JNO MIDWINTER.

Pray cheir up my little woman and forward the despatch of my things.

Captain Midwinter's last sailing orders had come and he obeyed them without comment; his first thoughts were for his wife and after her for his friend. A few days later he wrote again, very busy winding up his affairs :

I have this day taken a passage to Jamaica in the *Industry*, Capt. Wiggs, and hope it will meet with your approbation. All I beg of you is that you'll take perticuler care of your own health as well as that of your [*sic*] poor little womans; and in case any accident should happen to her in my absence that you'll be shure to give me the earliest account of it,

¹ Cardel was the late owner of Rockingham.

that I may alter my will, it being at present made intirely in her favour; after which there's no one I would desire to enjoy what I may have to leave as my dear friend the Admiral. . . .

I wrote to the board for leave. Admiral Boscawen was so obliging as to make me alter the stile of my letter, and in stead of wanting leave to settle my private affairs, would have it to reside in Jamaica for six months, agreeable to the King's Order in Council. This was necessary in order to save my half-pay. . . . I have now very little more to do than to provide my self with a bed and blankets, etc., having every other necessary provided by my noble captain. . . .

On February 28 the traveller sent a farewell letter from the ship, in the "Down Road":

The wind blows very fresh at SSW and the tide will not admit of the boats staying longer than just to give me time to tell you that I would by no means have my little woman under take a journey to London in the winter, as it will endanger her health to much. Not only that but I have full power to act as I go my self. . . . The damb Deal boat man has called three times in my writeing this, so must conclude with my prayers to God for all your health, and am, Dear Sir, yours,

JNO MIDWINTER.

This was the last letter from Captain Midwinter; he must have died in Jamaica or on the voyage. More than a year after his departure, Admiral Smith wrote to Mr. Mostyn, Controller of the Navy Office, about Mrs. Midwinter's affairs:

Mrs. Midwinter desires me to tell you that she is extreamly frightened with the thoughts of a Chancery suit, and that she desires it may not be continued without there is a certainty of success; and to this end she would not engage further in it till her case

is layd before the Attorney and Solicitor General, in the most exact manner and without the least partiality to her.

The case was that there had been an account of many years' standing between Captain Midwinter and one Mr. Culling of the Navy Office; Midwinter had continually pressed Culling to settle it but without success. Now that the captain was dead, Culling claimed that it had been settled between them, signed and witnessed. The widow was equally sure it had not, as her husband had said nothing about it; there were besides some discrepancies in Culling's statements and in the document produced. The case seems to have largely hinged on "what the waiter at Forrest's Coffee House says," he having witnessed the paper. It dragged on for a year, but was finally settled in a satisfactory way, from the tone of triumph in which Mrs. Midwinter writes to the Admiral from London, June 1753 :

I have now the pleasure of letting you know I have settled my affairs at £300 a year and shall set out of town on Tuesday morning about 8 o'clock for Hagley, where I hope to meet you and all my friends in very good health. I have taken a four wheel post chaise as far as Birmingham and shall be obliged to you if you'll send the chaise to meet me there on Thursday morning, as I intend being there by noon. I am with great respects your faithful humble servant,

DO:THY MIDWINTER.

When Captain Midwinter went to Jamaica there had been no question of his wife leaving Rockingham. Smith must have made some allusion to the confidence reposed in him, for Midwinter in one of his last letters says in a postscript : " It never once entered my head

that you would cherrish my wife in any other but an honest way." After her husband's death Mrs. Midwinter continued to keep house for the Admiral, and tended him through years of increasing ill-health. She seems to have been a pleasant person. One of Smith's brothers speaks of her low gentle voice, and though he calls her a "good old lady," she need have been no more than forty-five, according to the way age was then rated. Samuel Hood, who generally speaks of her as "your good Dame," extolls her "truly amiable disposition," and from time to time people sought through her mediation to obtain favours from Smith. Her health was bad and the Admiral probably survived her, as at his death in 1762 no mention is made of his dame.

CHAPTER VI

THE HOOD BROTHERS

THE most distinguished of all Smith's "boys," with the exception of Rodney, were the brothers Samuel and Alexander Hood. The story of how he came to know them is told in Lodge's *Portraits of Illustrious Personages*. It seems that in the autumn of 1740 Captain Smith was travelling through the little village of Butleigh in Somersetshire, when his chaise broke down. Night was falling and there was no inn where the traveller could take refuge; but Mr. Hood, vicar of the parish, appeared and invited Smith to spend the night under his roof. Smith gladly accepted the invitation, and it is said they sat till late by the fireside, the vicar and his sons listening enthralled to the sailor's tales. Next morning, as he was leaving, he offered, in return for Mr. Hood's hospitality, to take one of his sons to sea with him. Samuel, the eldest, at first refused, as he was destined for some more peaceful profession, probably his father's; but the younger son accepted with alacrity, and on January 21, 1741, Alexander joined the *Romney*, Smith's new ship. No doubt he fired his brother with a wish to be a sailor, and in the following May Samuel joined the *Romney* too. They were then fifteen and thirteen years old.¹

¹ The *D.N.B.* makes no mention of this pleasant tale, but attributes the promotion of the brothers to the influence of the Grenvilles and Lytteltons. This prosaic explanation perhaps has some foundation, as the Grenvilles had property in Butleigh, and after being on the *Romney* with Smith the Hoods served on her under Thomas Grenville; but it is clear that they looked upon Smith as their chief patron.

There is a touching letter from old Mr. Hood on the death of one of his children, in which he also alludes to another son at Cambridge, which shows that Smith had not limited his kindness to the sailor brothers.

Butleigh, July 29, 1749.—Dear and good Sir, I can with great truth declare that the most reviving cordial I and my afflicted family have received since the unfortunate loss of my lovely child, is the favour of your kind and endearing letter. This unhappy and fatal accident is by much the severest blow we ever yet received from the hand of God. He was a child of as promising a genius and of as sweet a disposition as any parents could wish to be blessed with. I know submission is our duty when God calls it; but the manner of losing him must, you may imagine, double the smart of the wound. For all your numerous past acts of friendship to my sons in the sea service, with the kind assurance of future, and for your late generous benevolence to my son in Cambridge, accept, I beseech you, the united thanks and grateful acknowledgements of me and my whole family. . . .

Samuel and Alexander were very promising youths; quite unlike in character and appearance, their only physical resemblance lay in their voices. Their education, especially Samuel's, had been far superior to that of the average sailor of that day; while the "high distinction" and courtesy of their manners made them also remarkable, being "adverse even to contrariety" to the usual ones in the Navy. They stayed on in the *Romney* with Grenville till Alexander joined Smith on the *Princess Mary* and followed him to the *Royal Sovereign*. After Smith left the *Romney* Samuel was never on the same ship with him; but he served with Rodney in the squadron commanded by Smith off the coast of Scotland, when he did so well

that at Smith's request Rodney made him a lieutenant. In 1748 he was on the flagship *Princess Louisa* under Admiral Watson, and his first letter to Admiral Smith is written May 27, 1748, from Portsmouth, full of hopes of promotion.

Dear and good Sir . . . I am not in the *Penzance* as you expected, for the day Capt. Porter wrote for me another was appointed; but I have the pleasure to acquaint you that this day Admiral Watson will write the Admiralty to desire I may be commissioned his 3rd officer. So great a favour how can I acknowledge? Words must fall vastly short! However, I beg leave to acquaint you that your approbation of my actions, with that of Mr. Watson's, will give me the highest pleasure, which I shall constantly endeavour to merit. That health, happiness, and prosperity may accompany your latest days, are the ardent and sincere prayers of, most good Sir, with the highest respect, your greatly obliged, most obedient and very humble servant,

S. HOOD.

Samuel Hood went with Watson on a cruise to America, but when peace was declared both he and his brother were put on half-pay. In 1749 Samuel married Susannah, daughter of Edward Linzee, for many years Mayor of Portsmouth; and the next letter finds Samuel there, plunged in the vortex of provincial politics.

The borough of Portsmouth was an Admiralty stronghold, and Lord Sandwich, now first Commissioner of that Board, claimed the right of nominating burgesses, as apparently had been done hitherto, without interference from the Corporation; but the Mayor and Corporation were determined to keep the borough in their own hands and elect what burgesses they chose. Sandwich, though he is now

chiefly remembered for having invented the handy method of eating bread and meat which bears his name, was a man of considerable ability, and, in early days at least, full of zeal for improving the state of the Navy; but he was otherwise an odious character both in public and private life. A violent partisan in politics, he used any means to gain his end, and the aldermen of Portsmouth showed great courage in standing up against him, especially as it was so much in his power to hurt them.

Hood's first letter, dated January 26, 1750, begins by explaining a previous one now lost. Smith had apparently suggested the Corporation should appeal to the Prime Minister. Admiral Sir Edward Hawke, afterwards first Lord Hawke, was member for Portsmouth and acting as intermediary between Sandwich and the Corporation.

I meant by the Esquire Mr. P-lh-m, who is the same you would have favoured if I understand you right. One of the geese had a son in the Office of Excise or Customs for a long while, and was fed with promises from the Esquire the whole time and was never the fatter for them; but on the young man's death he caused his secretary to write the father a letter of condolence, which, with some other trifling concerns some of them have had with him, makes them a little backward in covetting his patronage, and all most determined to wait with patience the event of time.

Yesterday Mr Rickman had a letter from Sir Edward H(aw)ke to the following sense, if not the very words: "I have had a private conversation with my Lord S-w-h and have told him every thing you desired, and do plainly see that he is determined to have the borough upon the old footing, for he says that it has done him as much harm as it can do and that he would not thank any one for the borough upon any other terms." The knight concludes with being concerned at not being able to conciliate matters,

and that he shall be glad to contribute all in his power to so good a work.

The following was Mr. Rickman's answer :

"I have the favour of yours and am concerned that my Lord S-w-h cannot entertain a right opinion of us, which I no ways impute to a want of pains in you; but must beg leave to assure you that his Lordship never will have the borough in so servile a way as he had. I have communicated your letter to my brethren, who thank you for all your trouble and do desire that you will not be at any more about it."

"Pray what is your opinion now?" says Samuel. "Will his Lordship come to or not? I think he must. If my questions are improper for you to answer, your silence about them will tell me they are so. My Love joins with Mr. Linzee and family in most affectionate regards to you."

On February 5, 1750, Hood writes again, sending some political squibs :

. . . As I have troubled you with every thing that the press has produced on the affair of Portsmouth as fast as they come out, I venture to send the enclosed pieces, and think that in answer to the Navy a very good one, but my Corps have a different opinion. But the truth is they have not capacity (at least most of them) to understand it, which I am convinced of by the remarks they have made upon it. The ballad has touched them home, and notwithstanding they say in their motto that their withers are unwrung, you may easily perceive by their fragment that they are not. . . .

It is given out by some that Hollwall is ordered home, but I don't in the least credit it and imagine it to be only said to see what effect it will have upon my good Mr Linzee. If you can know for certain without being at any trouble I shall be extremely obliged for the information.

There is a strong rumour that several of the guardships are to be paid off, which I suppose arises from a less number of seamen being voted this year than last. Do you think, Sir, it will be so or not? Every one here imagined that they rather would have added to than taken from our numbers; but as we are convinced of our being wrong, there must be a reduction somewhere, and without doubt the men in the guardships can be better spared and are of less use than any others.

If the success of the aldermen depends on their keeping together they will certainly enjoy it, for I venture to say that nothing but death will part them; which heaven avert!

The rumour about Hollwall, a relation of Linzee's, was not true, as Hood tells of his return three years later; but Portsmouth was still in the Admiralty's black books, for Hood says Hollwall had orders to proceed to Deptford, where his ship was to be paid off; "we wish it had been here, and are a little surprised that it is not so." It was a spiteful piece of revenge. As the ship had evidently sailed from Portsmouth manned by Portsmouth men, it would be very inconvenient for them to be landed at Deptford, while the town probably lost financially through the ship not being refitted there.

Admiral Smith was greatly pleased with his correspondent. In May Hood thanked him for "your kind compliment upon my manner of writing. Was my ability equal to my inclination I would serve you faithfully, but as I am convinced of the incapacity of my pen, I am afraid it will never be able to do you the least good; but if you think it can, you have a right to command it as long as my fingers can give it use, and I with the greatest gratitude and cheerfulness shall allways obey."

Hood's writing powers were put to good effect in

later years. When in command of the New England station he was specially requested by the Government at home to write fully on the state of that country in his despatches; these were published in his lifetime and are now very rare.

There are no letters from Hood for several months; he then wrote in some perturbation from Portsmouth, November 12, 1750 :

My dear and good Sir, as I am convinced from long and pleasing experience that any thing that regards me will give you pain or pleasure as the consequence shall prove, I can't help telling you of an affair that has given great disgust to some of the men in power, and in particular to the President of the board of Ad—ty; and shall be extreamly glad of your opinion whether you think it will turn out to my promotion or to my being kept longer on half pay? As it is a secret here I beg it may not be known from whence you get the following account.

Saturday was fortnight, Mr. Rickman and his adherents had a meeting, when they thought it right (that they might be sure that nothing should dispossess them of the power of chusing two members, and of course obliging Lord Sandwich) to elect burgesses to the number of thirty six grown persons, besides youths; among the latter is my son.¹ And as it was done previous to the knowledge of Counsellor Stanyford, who headed the fallen party, he is greatly exasperated thereat and has been and is now at vast pains to make the Ministry believe that the step is taken in direct opposition to them, and that they want to make themselves independant men. But the truth is, it was wholly and solely done to wrest the power from the Counsellor, who has been for some time representing himself as the fac totum of this borough. However, the Lords are angry; but for what cause? Was I to be hanged I can't see. For

¹ This son was then about four months old and died young.

where can the difference be whether Lord Sandwich is obliged by Robert or by Richard, provided he is obliged; which he certainly will if he has the least inclination for it; and I am sure that a little time will convince his Lordship and all the world that they are his particular friends.

I am an advocate for the measures taken, as they can now shew a voluntary inclination to oblige which before they could not. For instance, if a man owes you ten pounds and the law can force him to pay you, he does you no favour to do it at your request; but if again he is at his own option whether he will pay you or not, you must then coax and wheedle and be under some sort of obligation if he pays you at all. This is the situation the gentlemen now stand in; but whether I have stated the case in a clear light I can't say. However, I hope I have so as you may be able to understand it.

He went on to say that as soon as Lord Sandwich heard of what the Corporation had done he twice sent Sir Edward Hawke to try to extort a promise from Rickman that no more burgesses should be made. Rickman sturdily refused, but said that "every burgess made," including presumably the infant Hood, "was a true friend to his Lordship." Mr. Rickman also wrote to the President to that effect. The Ministers were evidently all agog over the affair, for Hood continued :

At the same time that Sir Edward made his second visit to Rickman, Mr. Alderman Chandler had a letter from Mr. Secretary Fox, desiring to see him in town as soon as possible, as he had business to talk with him upon that he could not commit to paper, and that he would introduce him to Mr. Pelham, etc. Which he answered very genteely and said that he was not well, therefore could not comply with his desire of seeing him, and that in regard to what they had done in

electing burgesses would be thought quite right by every *Wig*; (for you know old Sam is a mighty *Wig* man) as they had not made one but would take a pleasure in favouring the present Administration, and in a particular manner the board of Admiralty; which letter, together with Mr. Rickman's, was sent yesterday.

What answer they will have I suppose a little time will shew, if they merit any.

One answer they got very speedily. Hood went on to say, "Pye in the *Humber* is returned from Guinea, but last from Jamaica. She was designed, as is said, to be refitted here, but since the above affair is ordered, notwithstanding all her complaints, to proceed to Chatham, and all the officers in the yard have orders about her; all her standing rigging must be shifted."

For two years there are no letters. In January 1753 Hood was appointed lieutenant on the *Invincible* guardship, and in May tells the Admiral that one reason for his not having written lately was "on account of the fatal loss of his Majesty's ship *Assurance*, which occasioned my attendance on her wreck for near a fortnight." He then gives the Admiral notice of a timely present:

Tomorrow night will be carried to the Saracen's Head on Snow Hill, for the Stourbridge carrier, four hundred of prawns, all that could be got. I hope they will be good when they get to Hagley. If they are and you chuse to have any more, my Susy will do them with the greatest pleasure, and be really happy in having any thing to do for our dear Admiral Smith. . . . The whole that these will cost, butter, etc., included, was seven shillings. In the long pot is the spawn which my dear chose to put by itself, for fear it should spoil the prawns by not keeping. . . .

In May, 1753, Hood was appointed to the *Terrible*, commanded by Captain Pett. He writes to tell of a difference between himself and the said Pett over a man Hood had arranged to take as servant. Smith had apparently asked for him to be entered on the ship's books as, if entered as Hood's servant, Hood would have to pay for his keep. A lieutenant had the right to enter one servant on the books unless the ship's company was complete already; but perhaps this custom was beginning to fall into disuse.

How do you think Pett has behaved? I think but very shabbily. When I spoke to him about entering my man he said he could not then do it, but would whenever the ships came home with the troops, to whom we had lent many, or that we had an order to compleat our complements without them, which was then expected. About a month afterwards that order came, when I thought I had a right to look out for a servant. However, I did not do it till last week at Sarum; but then bargained with a man of a vast good character. Upon which Wednesday morning I told him [Pett] I had bargained with a man, and should be glad he would give directions for his being entered. He hummed and hawed some time and then said he did not know what to do about it, that if he granted it to me, not only the other lieutenants but other folks would expect it. I told him he should have thought of that before, that I did not take the favour as done to me but to you; therefore saw no reason my brother officers had to be angry if I had an indulgence of that sort. I am sure I should not in case they had and I neglected. Then he said he was advised not to do it by his brother officers; which made me extreemly angry, and I got up to go away and said that I was sorry he was not frank and free with me at first; if he had I should not have minded it, but as he gave me the grant of it I had regulated my small matters

accordingly, and had bargained with a man which I otherwise would not have done. "However, it's now too late for that;" made my bow and left the room, and with more coolness than I thought I should at one time.

He then called after me and told me he would enter him. I said, "By no means, Sir, I don't care you should do a thing on my account that is not within your inclination!" 'Twas his inclination, he said, always to oblige me, and insisted upon entering him; upon which I took my leave, *choler still up*, and when he makes the least mention about it again I will desire his discharge and enter him my own servant, tho' it will be twelve pounds a year difference. How long he will continue him I can't say, but not long I suppose, tho' if he does the whole time I belong to the ship the manner of his behaviour has destroyed the obligation entirely.

Wednesday last we had commissions sent down for the *Terrible*, with an order to Captain Pett to remove his whole company into her, and to make out pay books for the *Invincible*.

In the autumn of 1753 the East India Company asked the Government to help them to subdue various powerful Indian chiefs, who, aided and abetted by the French East India Company, were encroaching on British territory and endangering their trade. Dr. Madox, Bishop of Worcester, writing to Smith from Spring Gardens in January, 1754, says: "There has been of late a great bustle in town for an East India Expedition, men pressed, stocks falling, and fears rising. I hope all without sufficient foundation."

But the expedition was settled already, except who was to go in command and what ships; the heart-burnings among naval officers and the struggle to be employed can be imagined. Samuel Hood was trying to get appointed first lieutenant, and his father-in-law and the aldermen of Portsmouth used all their

influence to help him. Hood wrote almost daily to report progress in the negotiations between the Corporation and the Admiralty, where Lord Anson was again President, and Admiral Sir William Rowley one of the Lords. Hood sums up the position :

This I think seems plain, that his Lordship must be afraid of R—y; that is, I mean must be jealous for fear he should by his behaviour get more interest in the folks here than himself, which I don't know but he may do, for he is a sensible cunning man, and if he does exert himself to oblige them, I daresay they will stand by him on all occasions and at all times.

Another day he tells Smith that he thinks it inadvisable to approach anyone in the matter but Anson himself.

Portsmouth, 1st. Jan., 1754.—I have not yet heard a word from my Lord or Mr. Rowley in regard to my going to India, so that I begin to think they do not intend I shall go. I could very well say what you advise to Mr. Rowley without any fear of offending him, but I cannot do it in regard to my Lord, as doubtless his Lordship would not chuse [Rowley] to have any interest in this place but thro' him. Therefore whatever things are done he will take the merit of himself, and not allow it to the knight, or even the smallest share. This seems very plain. Therefore I believe you will think with me that it is not advisable to apply to Sir William as you kindly suggested, especially when I tell you that my Lord told Mr. Linzee to write to him for what he wanted.

If I am appointed first [lieutenant] the duty will be only in the day, which I shall be able to encounter very well, and if I am not, my friends will then remonstrate for me. But suppose they fix me second or third, and make some apology about it and tell me some pretty story, that they don't doubt but in that situation I may be provided for, they will

puzzle me how to answer and I shall throw it all upon my friends to say they expected something better, and think the chance not good enough in my unhealthy state to go for, and beg I may wait till something better shall happen nearer home. What do you think of that?

In a letter I had from London last night I was told that the India Company do not approve of Watsons going, and that you were talked of to go. I wish it was agreeable to you to accept it and they would offer it to you; I would then make no boggle about going if it was pleasing to my dear Admiral to take me; and I flatter myself it would. . . .

Smith must have written back to say he did not expect to be offered the command, and had not "solicited" for it, as it was not then a question of war; for some reason he said also that if he did go he did not propose to take Hood; and Hood replied:

Whenever my dear Admiral Smith tells me I am one of the foremost of those he loves, it fills me with pleasure beyond the ablest pen to express, much less is so poor a one as my fingers direct able to do it. I cannot but applaud your resolution in accepting and not soliciting an employ while peace continues, and tho' you tell me I should not have the pleasure of going with you in case you was to go, I must yet applaud your reasons for it, because they are founded on reason that is good. Notwithstanding it would require a much greater share of philosophy than I can boast not to repine at your ploughing the main with[out] me. Was I a captain my desires would be equally great to be with you, and should esteem it the greatest honour and felicity to be in that character under your flag.

On January 16th he wrote again :

Last night my dear Mr. Linzee returned from London, where he went to solicit preferment for me. My Lord Anson told him, seemingly very hearty, that

he would certainly provide for me and intended to send me out with the officer that commanded the seven sail, at least to the East Indies, and Mr. Rowley said I should not only be the first lieutenant, but that the *second* in command should have an order to make me the first vacancy in case the *first* died; and that he would do all he could to provide for me nearer home if an opportunity offered. Which I don't know but may, as I have had an account of Riggs of the *Jamaica* at Providence being dangerously ill, and he was in a consumption and drank very hard when he went out in August. So that upon the whole I think I have now some chance of being a captain.

Admiral Forbes is sent to to know his pleasure about going. If he refuses Mr. West¹ is the man, so says Mr. Rowley. Now what I am most afraid of is, supposing nothing happens for me between this and the going of the squadron, if it goes at all; and I should be recommended by my Lord Anson and Mr. Rowley to be first lieutenant. Is there not a probability that when out of the Admiralty reach, some favourite officer of the Admiral's may be made before me? I am quite a stranger to Mr. Forbes and Mr. West: therefore shall be glad of your opinion about it, as my friends here who have me much at heart will do all they can to prevent it.

I have had a pretty violent return of my old disorder, therefore should sooner be sent out to a sloop than go a lieutenant to India; but am determined to go if ordered. . . . I should sooner be sent out to [America? paper torn] [on] Allec's account, as he would then stand the better chance in case Mr. West should command the squadron. I am, my dear Admiral, with a heart full of gratitude and affection, your very much obliged and most truly affectionate friend.

The next letter is from Alexander Hood about his own prospects.

¹ Admiral Temple West, brother of Gilbert and Molly, and cousin of the Lytteltons.

Portsmouth, Jan. 23, 1754.—My dear Sir. My last letter to you was about the *Litchfield* affair, but I have very little hopes from that quarter and I can't help saying that I am afraid my expectations in going with Mr. West are almost as little. He will certainly command the squadron to the East Indies—fine opportunity for me if my friends had been as sanguine for me as I could wish. It seems he has two officers that he must in honour ask for, and if my brother is sent out by the Admiralty to be made there is but room for one more, and I am very doubtful whether I should be asked for.

I can't help thinking but the Grenville family and Lytteltons may have secured me for certain one of his officers, as I think Mr. West could not have refused their recommendations, but have taken them before any other, except the Admiralty's. I shall leave this affair to your consideration and desire you'll conduct it as you think proper. . . .

The ships are all appointed, and I believe the commissions are all given away but to the flagship, and those I fancy will be filled up as soon as 'tis known who will command for certain. . . . The French squadron have been sailed some time and are got half over; what the event of this will be I must leave to wiser politicians to determine. We are all well here and I hope you enjoy good health at Hagley and its environs. My compliments to all under your roof; the same attend the Clent and Pedmore familys; and I am with much love and esteem your ever obliged and devoted humble servant,

ALEX^r HOOD.

Anxious as Hood was about his promotion, he found time to ask a favour for a cousin of his, one Harry Hoskings, then on H.M.S. *Assistance* in the Bristol Channel. He writes on February 6, 1754 :

I find it is not yet sure who will command to India. If Pocock should be the man, have you acquaintance

enough with him to recommend Harry Hoskings? I hope you have, as he is talked on to command, and I should be glad to have Harry in so fair a road of preferment as your recommendation would give him; and indeed the poor fellow has no friend else to put the least dependance on.

Smith promptly made the request, and Admiral Pocock, who, however, only went second in command under Watson, agreed to take the young man. Hood was very grateful, and as he feared there might be some delay before Hoskings could get to Plymouth, he begged the Admiral to ask Pocock to reserve Hoskings "a mate's berth if he can, and if he cannot, that of a midshipman." To this request Pocock replied from the "*Eagle*, Plymouth," February 26, 1754:

In answer to my old acquaintance and good friend's request with regard to Mr. Hoskins, the mates are supplied, and likewise the midshipmens berths are filled up with numerous recommendations, but if the *Assistance* comes round time enough I shall endeavour to make room for a good man; as at this time, I can assure you, able ones in such stations are not near as common as in times past that we have known. Had I gone chief, my power might have enabled me to serve my friends, and it would have given me great pleasure to oblige a friend to all mankind. I most heartily wish you health and happiness, being, dear Sir, your most affectionate and obedient servant,

GEO. POCOCK.

About this time Allec Hood was taken ill with a bad throat, which one morning at two o'clock threatened to "choak" him, and the family gathered round in a great fright. However, Mr. Linzee, summoned in haste by Samuel, bled him and applied "a swingeing blister," which relieved the sufferer; and Samuel told the Admiral:

Allec is abundantly better, indeed as well as he generally is, but I am afraid his throat will be often troublesome and prove in the end fatal to him; he has let it alone too long. Mr. Linzee advised him to have the uvula snipt as the only method for cure; which if he has done he must go to London, as operations of that sort are seldom performed in the country.

Allec accordingly went to London, where the delicate operation was performed with complete success; the patient lived to be eighty-six, and his brother, who at this time was far from well, died at ninety-one.

Samuel Hood was not sent with the squadron to India, rather to his relief, especially as he had some hopes of commanding a ship. On February 15, 1754, he tells the Admiral that Mr. Linzee had

wrote to my Lord A. to tell him that he had just heard from undoubted authority that Captain Riggs of the *Jamaica* was given over by all the physicians at Carolina, and hoped his Lordship would think that a fit vacancy for me, which would oblige him and all his brethren. No answer is come yet, and whether he will do it for me as yet I am afraid of. . . . Mr. Atkins is much upon the fret that I am not yet provided for. He has remonstrated to his friend Rowley in regard to my not being sent with the India command, and has pressed him home that I may succeed Riggs in the *Jamaica*. To which he has for answer that as my Lord has undertaken to provide for me, it is best for him not to meddle but leave it wholly to his Lordship; which confirms me in what I suggested to you some posts back, that my Lord will not allow him to interfere with the Corporation.

Hood went on to say that he had written to Sir Richard Lyttelton, explaining the position, "and as I knew his intimacy with his Lordship was very great, begged if he had an opportunity he would throw in a

word in my favour." Sir Richard received the letter while Lord Anson was dining with him, and wrote that Anson denied the report about Riggs, having very lately heard from him, but that he promised to provide for Hood, "and I make no doubt that he really intends it and that you will find the good effect of his intentions before *next winter* at furthest."

"This letter was very pleasing to me," wrote Hood to Smith, "but all my friends here (as well as myself) are afraid his Lordship wants to put me off till after the election, and then will not do it unless Mr. Linzee will do every thing he wants in regard to making aldermen. If so all will be over with me (but take no notice of this I beg)." He therefore ventured to address Sir Richard with another letter, "which is agreeable to truth and I hope will have a good effect." He enclosed a copy and begged the Admiral to back it, "which I think will do me an infinite deal of service."

The letter began by stating that though Lord Anson had lately heard from Riggs, Hood believed he must now be dead, according to recent letters from Charles Town which described him as "striveing under a confirmed consumption and as far gone as a man can be and alive."

If therefore, my good Sir, [continued Hood to Sir Richard] you could obtain a promise of his Lordship that I should succeed to the command of the *Jamaica* upon her captain's decease, I should be the happiest fellow upon earth; not only at my being provided for but on its being to that sloop, as she is upon a station that by all accounts will be exceedingly advantageous to my health, of which I have had but a poor share for some years. My disorder is in my stomach and bowells. I have been three times at Bath with but very little success, and have been advised by several physicians to a warm climate.

It seems odd that a plea of ill-health should be used as a reason for promotion.

Hood next writes to Smith in March, 1754, after the death of Mr. Pelham :

By express yesterday morning orders came to the yard to sheath, fill, and fitt for the East Indies, with all possible dispatch, the *Tyger* guardship, which Marshall her captain does not at all like. The same orders came to the *Experiment* the day before. What can this mean? I am afraid the death of the Great Harry will occasion great confusion. Will not your relations be more in play; or who do you think will be the man? That is, who will have the sway?

In the new Administration George Grenville became Treasurer of the Navy, which perhaps helped towards Hood's promotion. He obtained command of the *Jamaica*, and on June 30, 1754, wrote from Studland Bay in the highest spirits, being then on his way to join her :

MY DEAREST SIR,

I had the honour of your last kind letter and am extreamly obliged for your kind wishes of health and success. If I have the happiness to enjoy the former, I shall rest contented, and not run the risk of a court marshall at my return. . . . I left Portsmouth Friday morning early; the parting was very severe. I did not think it would have affected me so much, but I find I love my sweet wench better than I thought for. We stopt one tyde in Cowes Road and the next in Yarmouth. Saturday night we reached here. . . . The wind is just come to N.W.; as soon as it becomes a little mod[erate?] we shall put to sea. I must write a line to my friend George; therefore can say no more than that I love you with the purest affection and am most sincerely yours,

S. HOOD.

P.S.—Upon second thoughts I will not write to Hamilton, as my letter will cost him money, having no frank, and I have nothing to say to him but to thank him for his kind favour and kinder wishes. . . . I am rejoiced to hear Allec say he is a candidate for preferment.¹ God grant him success, and soon! He has desired me to advise you if I hear of any vacancy, which I shall be sure to do. There was a report about a week past that the *Vulture* sloop was blown down to Carolina, and that her captain, Kensey, was so ill as to be thought past recovery. I have desired Holwall to make enquiry about it, and if it is true and he dies, Allec will be told of it. . . . Once more God bless my dearest Admiral, says his obliged and affectionate friend.

Captain Hood next writes from Charles Town, South Carolina, August 8 :

I have the pleasure to assure my dear Admiral that I am got hither in perfect health and ailed nothing the whole way. The *Jamaica* is the Lord knows where, though I hope to possess her soon. She sailed hence in March with soldiers for Virginia, and had a tedious passage thither. As soon as she landed them, went to Providence,² took on board Governor Tinker, and on the 5th past sailed with him to Philadelphia; so that to say when or where I shall catch her I cannot. When she was at Providence, Dubois, her commander, wrote to a gentleman here that he hoped to see him soon; but a young gentleman here who left her the day she sailed (and was acting officer on board in the room of the actual one who has been for some time mad) tells me he talked of careening at Philadelphia. But he is so unsteady a mortal that he knows not his own mind two hours together. If I hear not of him before a ship sails for Philadelphia, I will go in

¹ Alexander Hood was not employed till January 1755, when he became lieutenant on the *Prince* under Saunders.

² Capital of the Bahama Islands. Tinker was Governor there for many years.

her; 'tis as well as staying here and I can but come back again if I miss her. I have wrote to Providence to him and have given a letter to each of the pilot vessels for him; as soon as he receives either I think he cannot fail of making the best of his way back to Charles Town.

I like the face of the country much, and am treated with more civility and respect by all the best of the people here than I can possibly tell you. They are all prodigiously kind, and if I have but my health it will be my own fault if I am not as happy as I can be, absent from the woman I love.

. . . Pray, my dear Admiral, write to me often. I am sure you would if you knew but half the pleasure your letters give me; and as I am, as it were, out of the world, shall be much obliged if you will let me know how it goes. My compliments to your Dame and be assured I am, etc.

Hood soon found his ship and remained in command of her two years. The next letter is written from Hampton Road, Virginia, where Commodore Keppel had lately arrived, bringing the troops intended to subdue the French and their Indian allies. This expedition had been sent at the urgent request of the provincial Governments in the various colonies; for the position in America was much the same as in India, where the French were far more successful than the English in winning the affections of the natives. The American Indians for the most part took the French side, and the English settlers had a sorry time between them. Now the troops from England had arrived it can be seen from Hood's letter how confident both old and new Englanders were of success.

Hampton Road, Virginia, 4th May, 1755.—As the folks on this side the water have made a great bustle at home, I flatter myself it will not be displeasing to

you to hear how matters stand. We are all in high spirits, as every thing seems to go as can be wished. The Governors, General, Commodore,¹ etc., all mett at Alexandria and were unanimous in a plan to proceed on. The General, with twenty three hundred men, marched the 28th past from Wills Creek; from whence to Fort Ducain² (the first place to attack) is one hundred and forty miles, full sixteen days march. Some days they will gett fourteen or fifteen miles and many not above five, if so many, over the Allegany Mountains. I could wish the French stronger than they are, as I am afraid they will quit all the forts as fast as our troops can gett to them, steal down the lakes and join their main strength to the northward, before any of them can be knocked on the head.

At the grand council it was agreed that two vessels should be built on the Lake Ontario; which Governor Shirley undertook to see executed in six weeks, and to man them likewise; tho' the plan was brought out from England by Mr. Keppel, and stores of every kind for one. All which are now on board the *Jamaica* for New York; for which place I shall sail to-morrow, with the two new captains and their lieutenants, for the Commodore has commissioned them as troops. The captains have blank warrants for boatswain, gunner, and carpenter to fill up with such men as shall appear most deserving. I am to return here as fast as possible, which pleases me much, as it must any one who has the honour to be under Mr. Keppel's command; he being so much of a gentleman in his whole behaviour that it is very desirable to be as much with him as possible. The vessels will be fitt for service by the end of this month. The commodore's third lieutenant is now first, and he has taken Dick Norbury his second, which I am much pleased at.

'Tis really surprising what a fine martial spirit there

¹ These were the Governors of the Northern Provinces, and General Braddock, and Commodore, afterwards Admiral, Lord Keppel.

² Fort Duquesne, now Pittsburg.

is in the Bostonians! And the Assembly of the Province are so thorowly pleased with their Governor that they have done every thing beyond his most sanguine wishes.¹ Two thousand fine fellows are sailed from Boston, to attack a fort on an isthmus in the Bay of Fundy that cutts off our communication with the Indians—assisted by his Majesty's ships the *Success*, *Mermaid*, *Syren*, and *Vulture*: Rous of the *Success* the senior officer—and have 4000 more raised and ready for any service. They have for certain declared that they will take Cape Breton or die in the attempt, if their mother country will only give them leave; and I believe they are capable of doing it, for in the town of Boston they can raise at once forty thousand fighting men. New York has raised one thousand, and New Jersey six hundred, with money to pay them. Upon the whole Mr. Braddock has under his command fourteen thousand good troops, enough to drive the French quite off the continent.

In short our affairs here are in a fine situation; but if we do not give them a blow or oblige them to demolish their forts and desist from further encroachments, the continent will certainly be lost to us. Therefore DONT by any means huddle matters up, but let us have a war. I much fear the reverse, and if it should so happen must submit to it. I have this consolation in it, that I shall return to my station and have the honour of being known to a brother² of yours who I have never yet seen; and if Susan should come to me (which I have earnestly desired if no war) I shall then be happy indeed! . . . God bless and preserve in health my dearest Admiral, says his most faithfull and affectionate friend.

S. HOOD.

P.S.—I think matter should not be made up on any other terms but the French paying us the expence

¹ Governor Shirley of Massachusetts had drawn up the plan of campaign and raised troops.

² William Henry Lyttelton had just been made Governor of South Carolina.

we have been at in the equipment; which if they refused I would send a squadron to sea and take as many of their ships as would pay us; and if any overplus it should be given to the French Ambassador. Such treatment as this would make them keep faith a little better, and nothing else will. The vessels on Lake Ontario are to carry two six pounders and ten swivels each, and about five and twenty men.

Hood's bright prognostications were not fulfilled; Braddock never arrived at Fort Duquesne, for he was killed and his troops cut to pieces by the French and their Indians at the Monongehela. Braddock was a brave general, but he had been trained in the rigid German school favoured by Cumberland, then Commander-in-Chief. The set rules and discipline that answered very well in Europe against an army that followed the same rules, were useless against the Indians in their own backwoods, and the French who had learnt their way of fighting. The news of Braddock's defeat cast a gloom over England. Archibald Bower, writing to Dean Lyttelton from London, August 26, 1755, says :

We are here at present all in the dumps. What Generals ! What soldiers ! But the general who led the soldiers into such dangers is more to blame than the soldiers who strove to get out of it. Most of our officers were killed by their own men, while they strove sword in hand to stop their flight and oblige them to rally. The general indeed behaved with great bravery, but had he had common prudence or discretion, not to say common sense, there had been no occasion for his bravery. The Americans fought like lions, and continued fighting when not one of our regular troops was to be seen in the field or near it; and it was very lucky that both the French and Indians gave over the pursuit, in spite of their officers, to plunder our baggage, every man striving

to get what he could, and amongst them they got all. Col: Dunbar succeeds, of course, General Braddock in the command of the army. He is a soldier of fortune, and though he may not understand so well as General Braddock did the cock of a soldier's hat, the shape of a gaiter, or the precise distance that is to be kept in exercising between heel and heel, great toe and great toe, he will, it is to be hoped, act with more caution.

There is but one more letter from Samuel Hood, in which he inquires anxiously about the health of his "dear and worthy friend." It has no date or address, but from its style must have been written some few years later; for though no less affectionate it is more sedate in tone, and "my Susy" has become "Mrs. Hood." The future career of the brothers is written in the annals of their time. Both were fine characters and much loved, but Samuel stands out as the greater man of the two, on sea and land. Alexander married two rich wives in succession, became an admiral and was made Viscount Bridport. He was described in later life as "rather penurious and very rich," while Samuel was "quite the reverse and very poor." When in chief command Lord Bridport was "supposed to be cautious and had not perhaps that spirit of enterprize and general professional talent which characterised Lord Hood," whom Nelson called "the best officer take him altogether that England has to boast of; great in all the situations an Admiral can be placed in." ¹

¹ Hotham's *Lives of the Admirals*.

CHAPTER VII

THE BECHER BROTHERS

MICHAEL and John Becher started life in the Navy under Smith's auspices. Their grandfather was John Becher, sometime Mayor of Bristol. His son John married in 1727 Miss Mary Townshend, of Cork, the daughter of Sir John Duddleston, a rich merchant of Bristol. Sir John Duddleston was eventually ruined by losses at sea, and the Becher family was likewise impoverished. John Becher's son died about 1749, and his widow, Mary Townshend, lived at College Green, Bristol.

Michael, their elder son, in 1750 was a midshipman on board the *Centurion* in Algiers Bay, under Commodore Keppel. Keppel, then aged twenty-five, had been sent with seven ships on a special mission to the Dey of Algiers, to induce him to leave off his piratical excursions in the Mediterranean. The negotiations in the end were successful; and an Algerine ambassador subsequently arrived in England with a present of some wild beasts for his Britannic Majesty. In 1751 Michael wrote from Mahon telling Smith that he hoped they would return home before long, "as there is no chance of preferment in this part of the world, and I think the officers are all grown wiser than usual, for they won't even give a poor midshipman a chance for a commission. However, I shall always serve with as great patience as 'tis possible for a midshipman of nearly seven years standing."

After the Algerian mission was finished both Keppel

and Becher were out of employment for some time. There is a letter from Keppel to Admiral Smith, who had consulted him about Becher's prospects, which shows that the unsatisfactory state of the Navy was a source of anxiety to those high in command.

Bolton Street, Feb. 16, 1753.—I am favoured with your letter of the 10th, concerning Mr. Becher's welfare, which I have had in my thoughts ever since poor Dick Haddock first recommended him to me. It is not diminished in the least since my being out of employ, but how to effect it is a matter not so easily concerted. I have a very uphill work from the great number who I wish to serve; but such are the times and such is the nature of the sea service that I see no encouragement for introducing into it such as are deserving. Lord Anson feels it as much as we all do, and yet has not power to amend it. My young lads, Becher can tell you, are such as I confess I never saw at sea before, well bred, genteel, good and diligent to a degree. When I say never saw before, I mean such numbers together.

I have considered your proposal of recommending him to Capt. Hughs, and went on purpose to sound Lord Anson upon it, but have not been so successful as to find him at home, therefore would not delay any longer from giving you my opinion upon it. I should certainly advise his taking his chance with Capt. Hughs, first from its being a little employment, next that it cannot be of disservice to him, and lastly because I do not see at present how I can serve him. I don't think it probable that there should be a vacancy in so short a trip, but should it so happen you may be assured that all the interest I have shall be made to get Becher confirmed. If I should not be able to succeed it will not hurt the lad, but on the contrary it will give me room to sollicite for a recommendation to some body that may have it in their power, which at present cannot be done. I must remind you that by an officer's quitting, a confirmation

cannot possibly be obtained, and therefore would not advise such a step being taken. You may be assured my inclinations to Becher are good and what he deserves.

Your being his patrone will add to my wishes for his preferment, for believe me, dear Sir, that I am, etc.,
A. KEPPEL.

In June following matters had so far advanced that Keppel had persuaded Lord Anson to approach the King on Becher's behalf; much to the delight of the veteran midshipman, now of nine years' standing. Keppel, he said, "has contributed much to my promised success from the great character he was pleased to give Lord Anson of me, and which was entirely the inducement for him to speak to his Majesty in my behalf." The Corporation of Bristol also were concerned in Becher's prospects, which, as a General Election was impending, probably helped him as much as anything. "Their Lordships have answered the Corporation's letter, wherein they assure them that I shall be provided for soon, and I believe they only wait to have it confirmed by his Majesty." Becher also waited on the Lord Chancellor to thank him "for the service he has done me"; so altogether he was full of hopes, "unless any lieutenant of very great interest should apply to be employed."

About this time Becher had a serious misunderstanding with his mother, and the Admiral offered to intervene. It seems Mrs. Becher had opened a letter from Allec Hood to her son, in which certain allusions to a young lady named Sally made her entertain dark suspicions of both young men. Michael writes from "Mrs. Lamb's in Dean Street, Soho":

I am extremely obliged to you for your kind offer to write to my mother, tho' I do not apprehend there will be any occasion, for her last letter is in much

milder terms than the former ones; tho' I assure you they were all answered with the greatest affection of a dutiful son. . . . And indeed as I am likely to succeed in a commission I am much more condescending to her than I believe I should otherwise, for she might then imagine that I only regarded her from the principle of gain. . . . It was most certainly very imprudent of her to open my letters, and much more so in taking notice of the contents. Her reproaches to me were very severe, and had she not been one of the best of mothers I would not have taken the least notice of them, but left her to enjoy her opinion.

Becher went on to say that he was leaving next day for Bristol with Allec Hood, and hoped from there to visit the Admiral at Hagley, "if you will order us to our posts in the gun room we intend repairing there." The gun-room on smaller men-of-war was used as a dining-room for lieutenants, hence the joke. July 9th found the young men at Bristol, "tolerably jolly," says Michael rather dubiously. A buffer was evidently needed between them and the still indignant parent, for he added, "however, she does not fail to scour us, and if we could have the pleasure of your company I believe the whole affair must be stated to you and Hood and me to stand trial. It would give me much pleasure to have so impartial a judge."

While in London Becher had had his portrait painted by Joseph Highmore, as a present for Admiral Smith. His next letter is in answer to one from the Admiral, who in accepting the gift had demurred at the price Highmore charged, mentioning the portrait of one Lackey which had cost less.

I am much pleased at your acceptance of my picture; it is allowed by all that has seen it to be well done. Highmore [*sic*] did not draw Lackey, and ten guineas is the least that is given to any painter

of repute, and he told me before I sat that he would not take less. Now as to the constable's staff; if you insist upon it I will order him to put it in the picture, tho' I can't help thinking but it will be improper, as there is no hand appears to make use of it. Now had I been drawn a three quarter length the staff in my hand would have looked well enough. [He then suggested that as his mother wanted his portrait she should have this one, and] when I have saved some cash I will be drawn for you in a three quarters. But if you do not approve of this, as Wilson will be with you I suppose soon, he can put in the staff as you direct.

Richard Wilson returned from Italy in 1755. Meanwhile John Becher, Michael's younger brother, who was probably still in his teens, had gone to the West Indies on the *Fowey*, Captain Mackenzie, and writes to Smith from Barbadoes December 11, 1752 :

Honoured and dear Sir, I thought it my duty to advise you with our arrival here, which I did by a ship called the *Lovely Lass* bound to London; since then we have made two cruizes to Tobago, Trinidad, and Granada. In the latter I had a good opportunity of improving my French, which I assure you I did not let slip. I have wrote to my mother for a sword which I am obliged often to wear; but unless boath you and her think it proper I will willingly resign to your better judgement. Capt. Mackenzie has been so kind to put me in one of the tops at sea, which will be very advantageous to me; but in harbour I walk the quarter deck with the rest of the gentlemen. I would not have taken this liberty had I been contious to myself it would have been a breach of my duty.

His content did not last long, for in June 1753 Michael writes :

I yesterday had a letter from Jack; he sends his duty to you and tells me that he is heartily tired of

his Scotch ship, for that an English gentleman cannot have much favour shewn him where there are so many Scotch men, and more especially when relations. He is very desirous of going with me, and I shall be extreamly glad to have him if I succeed, and I hope you will approve of it. . . .

About the same time Jack was penning a long complaint from Barbadoes :

I am extreamly sorry I should be obliged to seek redress from my kind benefactor and authour of what happiness I might have enjoyed had my captain behaved with impartiality; but as I have suffered more than a gentleman can put up with without resentment, am obliged to relate it to my only friend, without partiality. You must know, worthy Sir, since my first coming on board the *Fowey*, I was without reason one of those who were very indifferent to Capt. Mackenzie and taken little notice of by him; but I could have made myself very happy had I not met with the following misfortune.

One night, having occasion to transport some powder, the lights were all put out as usual; at which time I was below, it being my watch off the deck. But being disagreeable to me to sit in the dark I went and walked on the quarter deck with the pilot, while some of the mids were below beating an old mid, which I assure you on my honour I knew nothing of till 3 or 4 hours afterwards, which several gentlemen can testify. The next day he made his complaint to the captain, who sent for all the gentlemen that were below when the lights were put out; amongst whom I was sent for. He immediately sent four of them who were favourites to the mast head for 4 hours, and had me and another young man publicly brought to the gun, and gave us six lashes without hearing what I had to say. After which he ordered us off the quarter deck, and told the boatswain to take us under his care and keep us in the foretop at sea; and

in the harbour to make us hoist at the teackle as much as any man on board.

I doubt not, kind Sir, you will think I am discontented with my station without a cause, or whether a gentleman under the misfortune I at present suffer, can bear to be under the lash of a scoundrel's tongue. There is a young man on board who has the honour of your recommendations, whose name is Dow, who has had the offer to walk the quarter deck, which he refused, and has got his discharge, and I believe will see you in a short time.

"I should have thought myself guilty of the greatest ingratitude in the world had I quitted my station without your knowledge," says Jack, but he hoped that the Admiral "when he has perused this scroll from an at present dejected youth, will consider that a gentleman cannot continue happy in such a situation, and will at once ask for his discharge."

The Admiral did so, and Jack arrived in London the following January, 1753, "after a pleasant six weeks passage," he told his brother.

I was rated no more than Captain's servant till the last six months of my time on the *Fowey*, which Mackensy told me was the Admiral's desire. He would not have discharged me upon the receipt of your letter had he not received one from the good Admiral, which released me from slavery.

Meanwhile Michael had received, apparently from Mackenzie, a jaundiced version of the cudgelling and other exploits, for Jack says indignantly: "I can scarcely think there can be so much villainy in the world to repeat such great untruths, and I take it greatly to heart that you would harbour such an opinion of my HONOUR as to believe such stories." Michael all this time was at Bristol awaiting his

commission. On January 9, 1753, he wrote the news of the place :

The *Assistance* by mistake has run up this channel and is now here, commanded by Captain Edwards; there is a sloop and a tender ordered here to assist in getting her away. They are at present very sickly in the West Indies; he has buried many of his men with his first officer, which has given him an opportunity for making a very young man a lieutenant. He supposes Capt. Faulkner in the *St. Albans* must be in a bad condition, for that he sailed a fortnight before him and was then more sickly than the *Assistance*.

I have not had time to enquire about the election. . . . I will let you know how it is likely to be the next time I write.

But though he wrote the very next day, all thought of the election had fled, for that morning the Corporation heard from the Admiralty that Michael Becher was appointed third lieutenant to the *Jason* at Chatham, and he writes wild with joy : " I shall set out to morrow morning with the officers of the *Assistance*, who are going to town with the money. My mother sends her compliments—we are this moment drinking your health in a bumper. Pray God grant you your health and I have nothing more to wish for."

A fortnight later Michael writes from Black Stakes near Chatham. His young brother had returned much in the state of the Prodigal Son, and Mrs. Becher seemed disinclined to play the part of the forgiving parent. From the severe tone of Michael's letter Jack's behaviour had not been above reproach.

I am sorry that Jack went to Bristol, but he was in such a shattered condition that I could not possibly take him to the ship. His mother is so much dis-

pleased with him that he will have but a cold reception, if he gets any at all; but I have wrote to her to plead a pardon for him and have offered myself a bond's man for his amendment. He has drawn upon her for £24 upon sight, which with paying his passage home amounts to near £130 since he went with McKensy, and for all this he is come home as bear as an unfeathered bird and as ragged as a colt.

Jack's sad condition doubtless touched his mother's heart, for she wrote to the Admiral a few days later saying that she was "bussy enough in fitting them both out; the young one wants but every thing, and the other's situation being so much altered for the best, wants as much. God preserve their vertue and honour, and I can't fail of being happy so long as I have a shilling for their use when wanted." Mrs. Becher wrote again February 17 :

I had this day the pleasure of Mr. Hodgkins' ¹ company to dinner. He was up on duty. . . . He is very much of a gentleman and a relation of Hood's, whose care I should not scruple to trust Jack under. My old Hospital is the rendezvous, you must remember. I always loved the boys about me, and your boys in particular. You are pleased to say 'tys to my credit I was unknown to you till my boys had long been born. As I hope I have supported a tolerable character I should have been very unhappy [if] your wonted goodness, so well known to the world, should have drawn the least reflection on yours on any account, especially *mine*. I think we both must be very clear from any censure of that sort, as we may justly appeal to the old motto round the King's Arms.² Jack is just gone down with Mr. Hodgkins, whose care I commit him to for this passage.

¹ Harry Hoskings, the cousin referred to in Hood's letters.

² *Honi soit qui mal y pense*.

Admiral Smith had asked Michael to take a youth called Edmund Wrenford with him as his servant; Michael wrote about him from Black Stakes :

I am glad you desire he should mess with the warrent officers, because I am certain it will be more for his advantage, and indeed I should have been at a great *non plus* what to have done with him, there being no other mess that I should have liked to have had him in. The warrent officers are all good men, but I am not yet fixed which of them he shall be with. He must be rated my servant, their complement being quite full; it will put me to a little inconveniency but, as I observed before, I shall never think any as such when 'tis to oblige you. We are just going to get the gunns in, and we shall sail from hence for Portsmouth the day after to morrow if the wind permits, so I think it would be proper to send the young man there as soon as you can. If he should be there before the ship, Hood can take care of him.

Samuel Hood wrote January 30 to say "Young Wrenford came to me Sunday morning. I will put him on board under good care, consigning him to Amherst in case he should not meet with Becher on his arrival." In another letter Michael says :

I can with pleasure assure you that 'tis not only my opinion but several others, that Wrenford will make a clever fellow. You did say that you intended writing to Captain Clarke to desire in case of a vacancy that Edmund might be rated for himself, but fear you have forgot it. However, I daresay if he continues to improve as he has hitherto done, we shall easily get that point gained by the next voyage. I have drawn for the eighteen pounds to fit him for the sea and pay his mess, etc. We have a good deal left; you may depend upon it I shall husband the remainder to the best of my power.

The *Jason* soon after arrived at Portsmouth, where the young lieutenant spent a pleasant time waiting for the ship to sail. "We have been very happy with Michael Becher," writes Samuel Hood. "He is just gone off, being about to sail as the wind is to the northward." But a few days later he says: "*Jason*, etc., are still at Spithead and St. Hellens; all are on board. The wind is not against them nor yet fair; 'tis about N.W. at present. We have not seen Becher since Thursday night, when he had the *honour* of being Master of the Ceremonies at the Assembly, as Allec did not go."

Michael was still hoping to take his brother with him, but Admiral Smith at first had other plans, and the young lieutenant on hearing from him that he was "for sending Jack with Captain Knowler to the East Indies," wrote "I cannot help saying that it gives me some concern, though I don't in the least doubt but Capt. Knowler may be kind to him, yet I am almost sure that 'tis impossible for an indifferent person to have that care and watchful eye over him that an affectionate brother can." Another reason he gave was that Jack was too young to expect preferment, and Michael thought he might as well serve with him till he had "served his time, and then we may be able to get him with a man of some interest, which you must be sensible is of greater service than sending him with a man who has very little or none; and I am informed that Knowler will not go if he can help it."

Admiral Smith in the end allowed Jack to go with his brother, much to Michael's delight. "I do assure you that I am every day more convinced that it will be much more to his advantage and to my happiness." He went on to say that orders had come down to raise more men "as fast as possible, which gives some people reason to think we shall have a French war.

If it should so happen, the West Indies I think will be no bad place, especially as Clarke has great interest with Mr. Knowles.”¹ The young man then bids a fond farewell to the Admiral and sends messages to all his friends, including one to “Mary,” that, as he will be continually thinking of her, “I cannot avoid remembering the parot.”

On March 10, 1753, Admiral Smith wrote a farewell letter to Michael, saying he was afraid that some of his had gone astray :

In the last I sent I enclosed a long letter to Jack, and I told you that I consented to his going with you; and I would not have that letter to Jack fall into other hands, as it was full of good advice to him but such as I should not care fools should see, for they, you know, hate correction and advice. But least it should have failed I write you the purport of it, which was that my principal reason for not caring he should go with you was because brothers and sons to officers often made mischief in ships. But, however, I had so good opinion of you that I had consented you should both go together, as you seemed to be so desirous of it; and charged him to behave with the same respect and carry himself in the same manner to every officer and private man, as he would do if you were not lieutenant of the ship. I charged him likewise to read the Book of Proverbs constantly till he had them graved in the table of his heart. I likewise bid him ask Wrenford for a book he has, called *the New Year's Gift*, and look therein for the prayer for Saturday noon and make use of it morning and evening, and endeavour to keep his mind in the disposition he desires God to keep it in, in the said prayers. This with the inforcement of his observing the two great commandments of loving God and his neighbours, was the material part of it. . . .

¹ Admiral Knowles went in command of the West Indian expedition.

In answer to yours concerning buying books, I recommend Rapin's *History of England*, to be read with the notes and without skipping the *State of the Church*, because I think it very material for a young man to be first acquainted with the History of his own country; and if you thought that not sufficient for your voyage I recommend Vertot's *revolutions* to you, and Prior's *Solomon*; and for Jack I bid you buy *Grotius on the truth of the Christian Religion*, translated by Patrick. All I shall say more to these matters is that what I recommend to Jack I recommend to you, and what I recommend to you I recommend to him. . . . Assuring, my dear worthy lad, that I wish him every blessing in this life, etc., I conclude with subscribing myself your most affectionate and faithful friend,

THOMAS SMITH.

I do not send this in a frank because I think it will be surer of coming to you without one. Remember me to Jack.

Admiral Smith was so much afraid that his letter should fall among fools, that after addressing it to "Lieutenant Michael Becher of His Majesties Ship *Jason*, Plymouth, Devon, X post," he added, "If the ship is sailed the post master is desired to return it directed to Admiral Smith at Hagley near Stourbridge, Worcestershire." The ship had sailed, luckily, as, except for the election letter to Nigel Gresley, this is the only one which shows the Admiral in direct intercourse with any of his boys. His sensible, kindly words are pleasant to read, but to twentieth-century notions his choice of books for two lively young sailors is somewhat formidable. Rapin's history alone is in fifteen octavo volumes, and it is to be wondered if, in spite of his injunctions, the "State of the Church," at least, was read entirely "without skipping."

This is the last letter concerning the Becher brothers, except one of no interest from John at Spithead a year later. Michael married Miss Catherine Trench and settled in Ireland. His son John married a cousin, Miss Becher of Southwell, and through her came into property there which his descendants still possess. John Becher married Mary O'Donovan and left two daughters, the elder of whom married Mr. Wrixon of Annisgrove, Co. Cork : her son took the name of Becher, and was made a baronet.

CHAPTER VIII

THE DEAN OF EXETER

THROUGHOUT Dr. Lyttelton's correspondence there are few allusions to Church matters; not one to "Methodism," though Wesley and Whitefield were drawing thousands to follow them; but the spirit of Jacobitism and the perennial fear of a French invasion gave strength to the feeling against "Popery." Three years after the '45 the Bishop of Worcester, writing from Bristol, says: "We abound here with Papists and Plaids,¹ and by what I learn from several parts of the kingdom, there seems a strange spirit gone forth, equally disloyal and ungrateful after such remarkable clemency."

This bishop, Isaac Maddox, successor to Dr. Hough, was very zealous against the Church of Rome. In 1744 he wrote from his house in Spring Gardens to ask the truth of a statement that had come to his ears; that a "Popish school is publicly kept at Alvechurch upon the Bishop's own lands. This assertion has been employed as a reason by a popish priest for his teaching a school in Gloucestershire, as I hear from my worthy friend the Bishop of Gloucester." The letter went to Hagley, and in the absence of the Rector of Alvechurch it was opened by his father, "thinking it might refer to my Cyder Commission." Sir Thomas said that the Bishop was rightly informed about the school which was at

¹ Jacobites displayed their loyalty to the Stuarts by wearing tartan waistcoats.

Downey Green, within the Bishop's manor, and added, with bludgeon-like common sense :

However, as the Government thinks fitt to connive at the papists serving God in their own way, I think there are stronger reasons to suffer them to have schools for the education of their children, which otherwise would be sent abroad at an expense which is now made at home; besides which they are bred in worse principles among the Jesuits in their seminaries than here.

Another time Dr. Maddox gives an account of how he dealt with five papists who came before him in court :

All seduced from the Church of England, whom I ordered to be cited, being presented by the wardens of their respective parishes. They were all well instructed to make the same answer; that nobody at all had persuaded them to embrace Popery or put Popish books into their hands, and one said that upon reading the Bible and book of Common Prayer, he was convinced that Popery was the true religion. I enjoined them all to go to the ministers of their respective parishes, whom they admitted they had never acquainted with their design of embracing Popery; and if they were not satisfied by their minister then to come to me; that I should think it no trouble to instruct them in the knowledge of the truth. They are all poor low people.

On June 4, 1748, Charles Lyttelton was installed Dean of Exeter. "'Tis a glorious piece of preferment," wrote one of his friends, "and I am very happy in the thought of eating a mutton stake off a very white table cloth in an elegant well furnished little house of *yours* in London." These aspirations were probably often realised; Dr. Lyttelton was a

hospitable man and his income, now that the Deanery was added to his living, was comfortable. He told his friend Sanderson Miller, however, that the houses of the Church dignitaries at Exeter were all old and inconvenient. "The Deanery is the best, thanks to my generous predecessor, Dr. Alare Clarke, who spent nearly £1,000 in altering and improving it, which was more than this preferment yielded during the two years he enjoyed it."¹ Dr. Lyttelton spent a pleasant life, by no means chained to his decanal duties. There is a letter from him in June 1750, written in the throes of "preparing for my long journey into Worcestershire, and consequently am not a little hurried on leaving my charge here for 8 months." But he did not neglect his cathedral, and after he had been twelve years at Exeter he wrote an account of what he had achieved in that time.²

He repaired the bindings of the manuscripts in the cathedral library, compiled a catalogue of all the printed books, and "released the ancient folios from their chains, which often prejudiced them and at all times rendered them very inconvenient for use." The ancient evidences and muniments he had cleaned and sorted, finding them covered with dirt and dust "to the amount of some bushells." The windows of the cathedral, except the great west window, he had well repaired, and "adorned more or less with painted glass." He was having the organ repaired and gilded by Mr. Craik of London at a cost of £300; the cathedral roof he also had repaired. The pavement of the choir was the one thing left that he was anxious to see improved before he left. "I fully intend offering the Chapter £50 towards this work, and flatter myself that the Bishop and other rich dignitaries will contribute towards it." He was also desirous of

¹ "An Eighteenth-Century Correspondence." ² *Ibid.*

improving the music in the cathedral, and wrote to a friend at York :

When I was at York Minster I was vastly pleased with the manner of chanting the service which prevails in that Church, and particularly with that of the Litany. Could you procure me that chant pricked down? My design is to introduce it in this cathedral, where the service in general is finely performed, but the Litany chant vastly inferior to that of York.

Dean Lyttelton was a member of the Royal Society, which, originally started in the reign of Charles II “for the purpose of improving Natural Knowledge,” after many vicissitudes was formed into a club in 1743. Meetings were held at the Mitre Tavern in Fleet Street, and in early years at least seem to have been largely devoted to the pleasures of the table. In 1750 the Royal Society Club resolved that “any nobleman or gentleman complimenting the company annually with a haunch of venison should, during the continuance of such annuity, be deemed an honorary member and admitted as often as he comes without paying the fine which other members do who are admitted by ballot.”¹ Their healths also were drunk in claret when the gifts appeared on the table. Donors of other delicacies were honoured in the same way till 1779, when it was resolved that for the future recognition of such gifts should be confined to the drinking of healths.

Dr. Lyttelton was also an original member of the Society of Antiquaries, and, evidently alive to the epicurean pitfalls of the sister society, wished to preserve the new one from a similar fate; for in December 1751 he wrote to Francis Drake, a fellow antiquary: “The election of the Archbishop of

¹ From *Club Life in London* by John Timbs.

Canterbury and Lord Chancellor into our Society is no bad presage of our future prosperity. I hope we shall do more than drink sack at a tavern, but will answer for nothing till I see the Society established on a proper footing." A year later he wrote: "I am now come into waiting, which will prevent my appearing at the Mitre till after the holidays. . . . We are going to engrave Doncaster Cross at the expense of our Society. When I viewed it 5 years agoe, I was much disappointed, for it appeared to me no very old structure."

Francis Drake was the author of "Eboracum, or the History and Antiquities of York," and "The Parliamentary or Constitutional History of England from the earliest times to the Restoration of King Charles II," a monumental work which eventually came to twenty-four volumes.

He carried on an archæological correspondence with Dr. Lyttelton for some years before they met in person.

In 1749 the first volume of the Parliamentary history was nearing completion. It was to be published by private subscription by Cæsar Ward, a printer and bookseller of York. Drake was a reserved man, and "never did or could ask one subscription for his book," but Dr. Lyttelton worked hard to ensure its success. It was of great importance to get the Speaker's¹ interest; but here arose some difficulties. Drake was a stout Jacobite, and his friend Ward was not only a Jacobite, but the editor of a Tory newspaper which had incurred the censure of the House of Commons. "I am very sensible the *occasion* of this censure was in itself no great matter," wrote the Dean to Mr. Ward, "but was apprehensive

¹ Arthur Onslow, for over thirty years Speaker of the House of Commons. He was father of the first Lord Onslow.

it might prejudice the Speaker against you, and make him backward in patronising any work that came from you."

He approached his eldest brother on the subject, who expressed his willingness to help, but as the Dean explained to Drake, "in the publick situation in which he stands, is under difficulty on that head, as your name is not to be mentioned in the affair, and Mr. Ward is in no good odour with the Government." He suggested, therefore, that the book should be put into the hands of his friend Robert Hoblyn,¹ "who is an intimate with the Speaker and an oracle with him in regard to works of literature." Being in the opposition, moreover, "he will be under no difficulty in recommending a work tho' the author may be never so obnoxious; and however strongly soever the Speaker may be attached to his own principles, he will take any impressions Mr. Hoblyn may give him, tho' a Tory." The Dean added reassuringly: "The most zealous Whig alive cannot charge your book with any partiality in favour of Toryism."

The proof sheets were duly handed by Mr. Hoblyn to the great man, whose first criticism was not encouraging, for the Dean heard from Hoblyn that "the Speaker objected very much to your citing so low an author as Jacob's Law Dictionary more than once in your margin." Dr. Lyttelton himself, however, was "mightily pleased with the sheets Mr. Ward sent me." The book, which was published volume by volume, proved a great success. Early in 1752 Dr. Lyttelton told the author:

It was with no small pleasure I heard the Speaker loud in your praises the other night. He really

¹ Robert Hoblyn of Nanswhyden House, Cornwall, book collector.

appears as warmly interested in the success of the work as if it was a product of his own brain. Mr. Hoblyn and myself are both of opinion that there is no occasion to publish any advertisement at all, and especially at the door of the House of Commons; the House having been so thin all the winter that there are seldom more than 60 members present.

Drake could not always disguise his political opinions, and Dr. Lyttelton gently conveyed to him some murmurs which had reached his ear.

Feb. 22, 1752. As I am jealous for the honour of the book, my friend Drake will pardon me if I say that I find many people offended with the manner in which he mentions Rapin and some other Whig writers, as *our Frenchman* and the like. This is fitter for a political pamphlet than a history, and these little marks of contempt prejudice many readers against the work, who attend more to trifles than the substantial matter of it. I hope, therefore, in the subsequent volumes he will avoid all expressions of this kind.

He wrote to Drake in July approving of Mr. Ward's intention to pay the Speaker a visit, "for it will be a mark of respect and deference to his opinion to consult him on the work in hand, and no man living is better pleased with a compliment of this sort than Mr. Onslow."

Dean Lyttelton was seldom in good health; coughs, catarrhs, and "scorbutic disorders" he suffered from all his life. Like most of his contemporaries, he was a constant visitor to the various health resorts of England, and his friend Lennard Barrett,¹ in the course of a letter about the tombs of his ancestors, strongly advised him to go to Italy. "We are

¹ Thomas Lennard Barrett, afterwards twenty-sixth Baron Dacre.

mistaken in thinking they have no good physicians in Italy. Their method, however, is different from ours, as they set very little account on what comes out of apothecaries shops, and cure people by making them have a great attention to their diet and manner of living. 'Tis better to be a healthy dean than a sick bishop." Dr. Lyttelton had just had a cyst removed from his face, and Barrett, after commending his courage, added : " and now I think you have nothing to do but to look out for a wife. You have made yourself snug and handsome, and have shewed yourself a man of spirit; two articles which go very far with ladies." But throughout Dr. Lyttelton's life there is no trace of such a desire.

He was a great traveller in his own country, and in the course of his life rambled pretty well over the whole of it. In July 1750 he says that since May 1st he had ridden above 800 miles, " which has reduced me in flesh, but left my disorders as it found them." It was very much the fashion to go for tours in England, and for the traveller to report his impressions in letters of vast length, which were often published, and received with an interest that only explorers to remote parts of the world could raise to-day. In 1753 Mrs. Montagu wrote :

Mr. Pitt, Mr. West and his son, Miss West, and the Dean of Exeter are going a tour to Maidstone, Canterbury, and Dover; they design to see all the seats, parks and castles on the seaside, and other things worthy of notice. I expect a very exact account of the places they have seen. Mr. Pitt has a correct taste, Mr. West a poetical imagination, and the Dean a love of antiquities, so amongst them one may learn the particulars of all the places they have visited.¹

¹ Mrs. Montagu's Letters : Climenson.

In the summer of 1752 Dr. Lyttelton went for a tour in Cornwall, accompanied by Mr. Borlase, an eminent antiquary. They went on horseback, and among the places they visited was Trelowarren, belonging to an old Lady Vivian, "where the situation was so bad" and the country round so wild and dreary that, wrote the Dean to his eldest brother:

Nothing would have carried me thither, but the prospect of finding a *sweet* bed to sleep in, which is seldom to be found at the inns in Cornwall, for both the houses and the beds stink worse than a pigstye. [Trelowarren not only provided this, but] what must please an antiquary, both the house and its inhabitants are an exact picture of the old style of living in Good Queen Bess's days. You pass thro' a pair of gates into a quadrangle; the left side consisting of a handsome chapel and large eating room, the right, a huge kitchen and other offices; in front is the mansion house, the entrance of which leads you directly into a spacious hall furnished with calivers, hunting poles, militia drums, and stags' horns. The furniture of the old parlour and bedchamber are in the same style; especially the latter where you see the labours of the female Vivians in workt cloth hangings, point lace beds, etc., for several generations past. But the greatest curiosity of all is the old lady herself, with her children and grandchildren all around her. After the ceremony of kissing both old and young was performed, for this is Cornish custom, we were refreshed with a cup of sack, (it should have been *hippocrass* to have suited the rest of the entertainment) and then proceeded in great form to chapel, (where prayers are regularly said twice a day) and in like form returned back to the parlour to supper, an hour before candle light. The old lady eat a pound of Scotch collops for supper, and wondered I could not do the like. Next morning Mr. Borlase and myself set out after breakfast and returned back to Trelowarren to our dinner, though the old lady's supper.

Mr. Borlase and the Dean went to see Lord Godolphin's house; after describing the scenery and all they had seen on their way, Dr. Lyttelton said :

Godolphin is not near so good a house as Lady Vivian's and is situate in worse country, if worse can be found; and I cannot, therefore, but honour my Lord Godolphin's taste for rejecting such a horrid spot, tho' it has been the seat of his ancestors for ages, and at the same time keeping a constant family of servants and a table for the exercise of hospitality and relief to the poor. There remain some good family pictures by Cornelius Johnson and Lely. Miller would have been pleased with a sight of the old wardrobe, where I unmasked some curious old pinked silk waistcoats and petticoats which are not to be matched even in the Green Room at Drury Lane Playhouse.

Tho' all this tract has an appearance of great poverty, and the houses in general miserable cottages, yet they differ I believe from all other cottages in Europe; scarce one in twenty minutes wanting a *sash window*; such is the fondness these people have for this kind of ornament in their houses. I would forgive them if they confined it only to their houses (tho' it looks very odd in thatched low mansions) but they have sashed all their churches in these parts, which ill suits the Gothick simplicity of these antient buildings. The winters are so mild in this part of Cornwall that *aloes*, *winter cherry*, and other greenhouse plants thrive well here in the open air.

One of Dr. Lyttelton's correspondents was Mr. Walter Harte, a clergyman, author of a life of Gustavus Adolphus, and a profound scholar, who had been at Oxford with George Lyttelton, and, through him, obtained the post of tutor to Lord Chesterfield's son, with whom he made the Grand Tour. On July 6, 1750, Mr. Harte gives a description of the excavations at Herculaneum :

. . . The blockheads who have undertaken to *developer* and *deterrer* these venerable antiquities have just hit on the wrong method to perform the work cleverly, and will spoil, confound, mangle and bury more than they ever will save. The King and his ministers have neither zeal, generosity, nor curiosity; and as throughout the whole Neapolitan dominions every antiquity found belongs to the Regale, of consequence the gentry, the workmen, and peasants search very little. A Neapolitan nobleman offered me privately two statues that were just found in his garden, on condition the English ship in the harbour would send a long boat to fetch them away at night; but his price was not low considering the clandestine nature of the job, nor did the pieces please me. On that they were walled up in his house.

I look upon it as a little breach of the antient freedom that subsisted between us that you have not employed me to execute any one little commission for you in these regions. Perhaps no man has had more opportunity than I to buy some things, not devoid of taste and curiosity, for very little money. But the critical moments are passed; and fortune, in *virtu* as in war, will not present them twice. As my expenses are the most moderate possible, and as I always cloath myself in black (tho' by the way there is no living abroad, if one consults one's pupil's honour, without 6 or 7 suits of cloaths) of consequence I allotted myself on leaving England just £50 for trifles in *virtu*; and that being spent now, I can behold any thing *oculo irretorto*. . . .

Robert Hoblyn, when on a tour through England with his wife, writes a long account of the places they had seen :

At Hull we unluckily mett the judges which made the town very full, but I had the curiosity to go and hear the trial of a Mr. Steele, an Irishman, for endeavouring to putt off a great number of light guineas. . . . The trial is the first of its kind and

plainly shews the deficiency of the laws and the necessity of some new provisions. As they could not in the least move the clipping or filing on him, he was indicted only for a misdemeanour, of which he was convicted. He was tried before your friend Baron Legge.

During the first years he was at Exeter Dr. Lyttelton had a most assiduous correspondent in Dr. Birch, an historian of merit, described by Walpole as a "worthy, good natured old soul, full of industry and activity, running about like a setting dog in quest of anything new or old, and with no parts, taste or judgment." "Who would give a rush for Dr. Birch's correspondence?" demanded that captious critic. But his letters to the Dean, containing the news of the day in neat little paragraphs, must have been pleasant enough to receive when far from the metropolis. Thus, in May 1750, after congratulating the Dean on the present tranquillity of affairs abroad, he says :

The deaths of two of our judges, the Lord Mayor, Alderman Lambert, and several others who attended the last session at the Old Bailey by a very unusual kind of fever that eludes all the skill of the physicians, has revived the memory of the Black Assize at Oxford in 1571, and of your city not many years ago, which proved fatal to Lord Chief Baron Pengelly, Serjeant Shepherd, and others.

The condition of the prisons at this time was terrible, and typhus was called gaol fever, as the prisons were never free from its ravages. After the outbreak at the Old Bailey, it became the custom to strew the Court with herbs to disinfect it; which custom survives to this day in the herbs put on the prisoner's dock and the bunch of flowers presented to the judge.

Dr. Birch continued :

We have a periodical paper published here on Tuesdays and Saturdays in a sheet and a half, under the title of the Rambler. Nineteen numbers are already printed. The serious ones are in general excellent; but the author, who is Mr. Sam Johnson who gave us two winters ago the tragedy of "Irene" has not a sufficient knowledge of the world to furnish out a paper of entertainment.

In April 1753 he noted that :

Mr. Hume, the Scots sceptic, who attacked the notion of Miracles about two years ago with so much petulance, has met with a very good writer in his own country, who has taken him to task for his *Inquiry into the Principles of Morals*.¹

Voltaire and the King of Prussia are now so exasperated against each other that the public may now have the amusement of seeing them expose each other. A day or two after the former left Potsdam there was found the following epigram :

Nouveau Julien Frederic,
Ennemi du ciel et du monde;
Finissez d'écrire au publique
Ou craignez qu'il ne vous reponde.

In July 1757 there is a letter from the Dean's improper friend, Thomas Potter, now become a notorious personage in the wild life of London. He had been to Exeter while the Dean was away, and his arrival apparently caused a flutter in the quiet cathedral city, for he wrote from Prior Park near Bath : ²

It was intended that this should have been addressed to you from your own parlour, but not even the

¹ David Hume, the historian, was answered by one Anderson.

² Prior Park belonged to Ralph Allen, friend of Pope and all the literary men of his time.

Deanery House, perhaps not the stall itself, could afford me a sanctuary against impertinence and intrusion. I have been obliged, therefore, to defer to my arrival here my acknowledgments for the hospitality you have afforded me. The pious Mrs. Turner [the Dean's housekeeper] has been as communicative as piety would allow. Her own stores she has with all chastity shut up from me, but those of her master she has shared with a due liberality. Yet there wanted one thing to render the house comfortable; there wanted the master. Fate does not intend that we should meet in the Deanery House; let this be a motive to urge your removal into some episcopal palace. I am told this will find you at Ealing.¹ Pray tell Mr. Pitt if he is still there that I shall rejoice in delivering over his borough of Oakhampton into his hands. I hope his interest there will receive no prejudice from me; my pocket and my lips are drained in the support of it. Tell Sir Richard and the Duchess that I am one of the many who esteem and honour them. As to you, my good old friend, I must be allowed to add one other expression, that I love as well as esteem and honour you, and am truly your affectionate friend

Tho: Potter.

Dr. Charles was a man of great industry in many mild directions. Besides the volumes of archæological and antiquarian notes in his handwriting, he kept up a voluminous correspondence, and was always being applied to in business affairs, for which his legal training came in useful. He spared himself no pains, not only in the affairs of friends but in those of people he cared little for; he did this partly from good nature, but a good deal because he really enjoyed it.

Upon the death of his father he seems to have

¹ Sir Richard then had a villa at Ealing.

succeeded, with his eldest brother, to the trusteeship of Lord Dudley's affairs, and they were co-guardians to his youngest sister, Elizabeth Lea, a charge which came to an end with some abruptness. The tale is told in a letter from a clergyman, Mr. Briscoe of Dudley, to George, then Lord Lyttelton :

Dudley, July 19, 1759. Being assured of your Lordship's concurrence in my marriage to Miss Lea from Mrs. Clare, and concluding from the Dean's postscript and the tenour of his letter that he was likewise assenting, provided her affections were placed on me and Mr. Prattington's engagements broken off; and that Admiral Smith had declared to Mr. Shaw that in the circumstances above mentioned, I could not fail of his consent . . . I have therefore, upon such an encouragement, applied to the lady and have been successful therein. . . .

Hearing of Miss Lea's intention of being at a play at Birmingham, with great pleasure I embraced the opportunity of addressing her there, as by the policy of others all interview was cut off between us. Agreeable to my expectations and wishes I found I was not without a place in her affections, which she more fully confirmed to me next day at Dosthill, where she, with Dr. Hervey and his lady¹ and another friend or two, agreed to go upon a party of pleasure. She there declared how ill I had been used and that fair play had not before been given me. After consenting to marry me, I went to Mr. Shaw to prepare the articles by Saturday morning, the time appointed for our marriage, which were accordingly drawn and executed. Previous to this, on Friday morning, Mr. Prattington came to Dosthill and had an interview with Miss Lea in the presence of a friend he introduced, and the whole company; where she openly declared, without any coaction whatever, that she had considered of the affair between them

¹ Mrs. Hervey was sister of Miss Lea.

and would go no further with him, and had promised marriage to me. He accordingly wished each of us very well, and in a genteel manner took his leave.

This representation I hope needs no artifice to defend it. The thing speaks for itself, and my wife herself will declare that heretofore I had not fair play. I want nothing now to complete my happiness but an assurance of your approbation of my conduct.

Your most obliged, etc.,

BEN BRISCOE.

PS. I have here enclosed an abstract of the settlement for your satisfaction.

Lord Lyttelton forwarded the letter to his brother with the remark: "Mr. Briscoe pleads my consent delivered to Mrs. Clare. That consent was I am sure nothing more than a consent that he should endeavour to gain Miss Lea's affections, not to marry her in the way he has done, which is such as cannot be approved of by any guardian or friend of the lady."

CHAPTER IX

DEAN LYTTTELTON AND SAMUEL HELLIER

It is difficult to see why Dr. Lyttelton should have saddled himself with the guardianship of Samuel Hellier, a post from the outset promising complications, which duly came about. This youth was the son of a well-to-do squire, Samuel Hellier, of Rushock near Bromsgrove, not far from the Dean's living of Alvechurch; another estate was Woodhouses near Wolverhampton. Mr. Hellier died about January 1, 1752, leaving his affairs in considerable confusion, and for a year the question of who should be guardian to his fifteen-year-old son, a ward in Chancery, was not settled. Young Samuel's two nearest relations were his grandmother, Mrs. Huntback,¹ a cantankerous, quarrelsome old woman, and one Harris, a rascally Jacobite attorney, who were at daggers drawn; Sam's father also had been a keen Jacobite. For all these reasons, therefore, the boy's friends were anxious to find a guardian of approved political and moral principles. The first letter on the subject is dated December 31, 1752, and was written by Lady Stamford, wife of a neighbouring magnate, to the Dean :

Sr.

Yesterday I was told by Dr. Wilkes that you was named guardian to young Mr. Hellier, and am desired by him in the name of Mrs. Huntback, the grandmother, to beg you will accept of this

¹ Sarah Cooke, b. 1681, married Rupert Huntback of Featherstone, Staffordshire, in 1709.

trust. It will be saving a young man from ruin which threatens him in the hands he now is; and serving your King and country by enabling him to be educated properly. These reasons I am sure will have the greatest weight with you; and as Dr. Wilkes is his relation and he and Rupert Dovey are the persons best acquainted with his affairs, and consulted and employed by Mrs. Huntback, your knowledge of and confidence in them may much lessen the trouble of this affair. Not knowing if you ever had heard any thing of the matter, I got the enclosed memorandum from Wilkes. . . .

The memorandum runs as follows :

The late Mr. Samuel Hellier had three wives; the second was Mrs. Sarah Huntback, (by whom he had several children which are all dead, except this infant Samuel) and the third was the Lady Cooks Winford now living. Mr. T. Harris, attorney, and the late Mr. Hellier had great dealings together, and 'tis apprehended there is a long account between them unsettled, and Mr. Harris considerably in his debt. As Mr. Harris was privy to many of Mr. Hellier's affairs, he has entered several caveats in Doctor's Commons, and so has prevented letters of administration being granted to the widow. He is endeavouring to establish an old will (made before the infant Samuel was born) part of which was in his favour, but that part is scratched out and the testator's name and a seal are torn away. This he lays to the charge of Lady Winford, and has had one commission at Stourbridge in order to prove this will and a codicil of his own handwriting to which Mr. Hellier had neither put his name nor seal. He has had many people lately in London on this account, and we are informed will have a second commission. These transactions must be attended with great expense. He has endeavoured to set the young gentleman against his grandmother and her friends, has taken him to London, supplied him with money, has bought

him fine cloaths, instils ill principles into him of all kinds and has made him undutifull.

The Dean accepted the charge, and then at the eleventh hour showed an inclination to withdraw; "which I fancy can only arise from some false representations made to you," wrote Harris, who, failing himself, wished Dr. Lyttelton to be guardian, probably because he thought the Dean would not interfere with him.

If you have received any account concerning the young gentleman which came from his grandmamma, (who is very desirous to become one of his guardians) my cosin Harris in London will give you her true character. . . . I can truly say that I believe there is scarce a mother in England who is more disliked by an only daughter than the late Mrs. Hellier disliked her mother; and indeed Mr. Hellier had much the same opinion of her. And I think if anything could give them uneasiness it would be that their child was under the care of so improper a guardian as Mrs. Huntback.

Master Hellier's present freehold estate is near £800 per annum, and about £150 per ann. more after the death of Lady Winford; and about £160 per ann. more after the death of Mrs. Huntback; besides at least 2 thirds of his father's personal estate, which after payment of debts will be to the young gentleman about 4 or 5 thousand pounds. And should we establish his father's will, the personal estate will then be to him about £8,000.

PS. Master Hellier is backward in his learning, which is owing to his Mamma's over fondness; but as he is a youth of good sagacity he may yet regain a good deal of his lost time.

The Dean and Mrs. Huntback were eventually appointed guardians, and Dr. Wilkes wrote in great satisfaction on hearing it. He seems to have been

rather a delightful man, full of spirits and common sense, and though he had refused to be guardian himself, had volunteered to help in the matter solely out of concern for the boy's future, which between Harris and Mrs. Huntback seemed in considerable jeopardy.

'Tis with great pleasure I see you have accepted the care of Master Hellier, whose mother being my relation and his having a plentiful fortune, his welfare and the figure he may make in life gives me no small anxiety. Mr. Harris is not a man of veracity, and acts in an arbitrary manner without orders, so as to run the risque of spending great sums of money, with a view, I fear, of enriching himself. He has gained such an ascendant over the young man that he can make him say or do what he pleases. . . . Mrs. Huntback thinks herself happy in having a man of worth and honor to assist her in this difficulty, and as she will listen to what advice I shall give her you may be assured that everything shall be done to lighten your trouble.

Next comes a letter from young Hellier himself, written from Mr. Wilkinson's "Free School near Birmingham," to thank the Dean for becoming his guardian and assuring him that: "I shall always make it my study to observe your directions, and hope you will soon chalk out the method of my education." Sam went on to indicate the direction he hoped the chalk would take :

It must be left to you whether a private tutor will not be of great use to forward me in my learning. . . . I must desire you'd give me leave to spend one half of my holidays with Mr. Harris, and the other half of my holidays I propose to spend with my Grand-mamma, if you approve of it; and as I am much confined in this close town, I hope you won't think

it unreasonable was I to hyre a horse upon a Saturday, and ride out for a few hours for the advantage of my health; and I should esteem it as a very great favour if you'd be so obliging as to write to Mr. Wilkinson to desire he'd allow me a little more liberty.

In answer to a letter from the guardian, Mr. Wilkinson wrote :

Whatever commands you will please to give me about Master Hellier shall be carefully observed. He shall have the liberty you desire of riding out with a proper person, but not of making visits; for I am sure he would meet with some very ill advisers who have already taken advantage of his youth. . . . His temper appears to me to be naturally good, but he is too easily inclined to that side where he is most flattered and meets with the greatest indulgence. His proficiency in learning is but small, . . . but I fear not in a few months to make books more easy, and consequently more agreeable to him.

Young Sam hankered sorely after the joys of Oxford, "for I really think I should improve much faster than in this place, not but what I have always liked Mr. Wilkinson and in my opinion he is a very good man." But the Dean kept him at school till the following November, 1753, when, Samuel being close upon seventeen, Dr. Lyttelton sent him to Exeter College, under the care of Benjamin Kennicott, a great Hebrew scholar and Fellow of Exeter. The year he took charge of young Hellier Dr. Kennicott began the chief work of his life, a translation of the Bible from the Hebrew, which was published in 1780, three years before his death. He was a "friendly, laborious, worthy man," and noted for his love of figs. "Kennicott's figtree" still flourishes on the walls of Exeter College.

Mrs. Huntback, who always looked upon the gloomy

side where her grandson was concerned, and had small belief in the beneficent influence of the University, begged Dr. Lyttelton to see that the boy's tutor kept him "within bounds as to his expences."

He loves treaties and I know ye expence of that place when my own father and many of my near relations were educated there; and it will put him upon drinking which he used not to like, and heat his blood which he can't bear, I'm sure. He has sent for his spinett which I have sent this day. I am glad to encourage musick. Pray God continue his health and make him good. He don't want sense but this man setts him against me dayly. My grandson begs hard for a servant which I hope you'll prevent: next must be a brace of geldings: then adue to learning.

Samuel wrote from Oxford to a friend a pleased description of his early days there: "I have a study, a bedroom, a dining room and an antichamber here, for my appointment: likewise a garret and a cellar," and in the following March says he is learning "the use of the globes and the situations of the heavens and earth, the planets, stars, etc., some easy Latin authors, logic, music, and fencing." On December 20, 1753, he sends his guardian a timely hint, trusting that, "in the multiplicity of business which you have on your hands, you will not forget St. Thomas is quarter day." For the rest he says:

I am still in as agreeable a situation as when I last wrote to you, and make no doubt but I shall be so while under the care of so good a tutor. As to any party prejudices, as I have received none yet it will be my endeavour to keep so. My desire is to appear like a gentleman and with such a character as every prudent man ought; and I hope neither you nor any one will ever have occasion to condemn me on that head.

Dr. Lyttelton probably chose to send his ward to Exeter College in preference to others because Dr. Kennicott was a friend of his, but also because Exeter was one of the few Whig colleges in that Tory city.¹ He had warned the young man's tutor to be on the watch for the dread signs of political as well as other imprudences; but at first all went well. Dr. Kennicott wrote in January 1754, sending a pleasant account of his pupil and his studies, of which music was the only one he took a real delight in :

I must assure you, Sir, in justice to Mr. Hellier and for your satisfaction, that he has been thus far very regular and sober. He keeps pretty close to his room and complies readily with what I propose to him for his reading. As yet he has read nothing professedly or in form but Caesar's commentaries, because he is extremely backward in Latin. He is about to learn some short easy system of logic in order to qualify himself for bearing a part in the College dissertations. He has bought Hook's Roman History which he will likewise begin soon. I have only to add here that as I consider learning but as ornamental and religion as necessary, my endeavours are directed accordingly. If you prefer any other book or method I shall be very happy in receiving your directions; and I believe Mr. Hellier would chearfully undertake what you should recommend, as he speaks of and drinks the Dean of Exeter (to all appearance) with great pleasure.

He has begun with his master on the violin, which I remember you approved of. He has mentioned keeping a servant, but I believe has no thoughts of doing it yet. I told him it would be highly improper at present, but 2 years hence or so, if he should desire it, it might be perhaps allowed him. There is a garret over his chamber, which he has taken to prevent

¹ Christchurch, Merton and Wadham were the other three. Stride's *History of Exeter College*.

its being taken by any other person, and for a servant when it shall be thought proper to allow him one.

He is in good health; I like his temper greatly as far as I have yet seen of it. We breakfast together every morning and at present are on very good terms. There is one odd circumstance which I don't relish. He has had sent him from Birmingham an Old Interest¹ saddle and furniture, (blue and silver) which I hope he will never make use of as it would be an open declaration of violent Toryism. I have not yet spoken out upon the subject, nor desired him to change the cloth; but I intend taking some very favourable season of address, after having prepared the way (as I have already sometimes done) by observations more in the general.

By March 1754 young Hellier was finding his feet. Upon receiving complaints from home of his extravagance, he replied indignantly that he was not extravagant, but that his allowance was too small for a gentleman commoner, every one of whom had £200 a year clear of reductions; he refused to be compared with "Mr. Turton's son," who was a commoner. The Court of Chancery had allowed him £200 a year, but his guardians, to prevent extravagance and to pay off the debt on the estate, had kept £50 of it back. Sam heard of this through Harris and loudly protested; he was then given the £200, but never forgave Dr. Lyttelton. This same month of March Dr. Kennicott sent the Dean a fairly satisfactory account of his pupil:

Mr. Hellier regularly attends me every day at lecture. Stanyan's Grecian, Hooke's Roman History, and Caesar's Commentaries succeed each other daily, and he minutes down the more memorable things

¹ The Tory side was called the "Old Interest," and the Whig the "New Interest."

in the two former, after lecture. He mentioned to me t'other day some thing about going to town, but upon my saying that he could not expect my leave without orders first from his guardians, he at once desisted. I have great pleasure from his behaviour, excepting that he is not quite so cautious in his choice of his company as you recommended to him and as he promised to be. A gentleman from Staffordshire was here with him two or three days lately. He told me his name was *Blatchfield* (or some such name) and that he was *an acquaintance of his grandmamma's*. He seemed a tall, thin, and young man. I confess I did not much like some of the company he brought with him to our college.

The Dean promptly wrote to inquire of Mrs. Huntback as to her acquaintance with Blatchfield, and received an avalanche in reply. After an immense tirade against Harris, she went on to say :

The acquaintance I have with his clerk Blashfield is this. Soon after Mr. Hellier's death my grandson and I mett this B. on the road, and Harris's man with a portmanteau; he told me he had been at Featherstone¹ to fetch Master Hellier. . . . He would have forced me from him whether I would or not. I was a mile on this side of Wolverhampton, and I turned my horse and said I would raise ye town before my property should be forced from me, and got him with me with great difficulty. But soon after I came home he had ye impudence to send Harris's boy which I could not get out of the house till I sent for ye constable; and he doged about the building and got his [Samuel's] cloaths when I was in bed, and ye next day my grandson went off and I never heard word of him from Holy Thursday till Tuesday following at a consort at Stourbridge.

¹ Mrs. Huntback lived at Featherstone, in a "very old house," as she described it, a few miles from Woodhouses.

I had just before sent to him (Harris) for heriots¹ from broom, as my grandson is lord of that manor, and he sent me word there was non due. And upon that I wrot to Dr. Wilkes and said 'See how this villian cheates us!' and more such good words but no lyes. And a friend lay a dying; next neighbour sent for me; I wraped up my leter and laid it in my window. He came and read it and took it away. They sent for me home and I mist my leter; and upon this leter he arrests me and brought it to a triall; Ford and other council feed; and the night before sent word he would not try ye cause and begged I would say no more of it; so when I found ye consequences I dropt it, els ye Doctor would have don all he could as taking his property.

Then to mend all this, in a fortnight (Harris) sends Blashfield to arrest me in ye most insulting rude manner that he could express himself; about a fortnight after, a summons into ye King's Bench, then a subpoena into Chancery, and then a copy of a will. Four suits this fellow commenced against me, and I can't tell for what Blashfield is concerned in all. . . .

The Doctor is in such high spirits can't express it.

Mrs. Huntback added a cryptic postscript: "I think a nobleman's frank will pass, els would not make a double letter; and these are old franks, when there was no heriots wanted and great civility between Lord Ward's family and Mr. Huntback. A fine godfather indeed; stopt up two roads." In a later letter Mrs. Huntback wrote: "Lord Ward has filed a bill for four more heriots."

Meanwhile Dean Lyttelton had been considering Dr. Kennicott's last letter, and eventually sent his

¹ Heriots, first instituted in the time of Canute, were the arms and accoutrements which on the death of a vassal were restored to the king or overlord. As time went on agricultural implements and the dead tenant's "best beast" took the place of arms, and sometimes a picture or a jewel had to be surrendered.

ward one intended to change the whole tenour of his life. To judge from the alterations and erasures in the copy, it had cost him much trouble to compose :

Exeter, May 1, 1754.

Dear Sir,

I was favoured with your letter and am glad to find by it that you have received your money [the extra £50] and feel yourself so happy in your present situation. Your future welfare and the figure you will make in life depends entirely upon your present conduct. Now as I have both by inclination as well as duty your interest warmly at heart, I must take the liberty to speak to you without reserve at all times when I see your conduct wrong and your interest like to suffer. The reception you have lately given to Blashfield at Oxford will not suffer me to be silent. For God's sake, Sir, reflect coolly on this proceeding. Your good old grandmother (to whom you owe every obligation that the tenderest parent and most disinterested friend can lay upon you) has met with such usage from this fellow and his colleague, Mr. Harris, as would, one would think, raise in your breast the highest indignation and resentment against them. On the contrary she has the cruel mortification to find that they still have your confidence and ear. (The Dean had first written "Countenance and support" but neither are scratched out). . . .

Had not God blessed you with a good understanding, both she and your other friends would cease to complain and lament only your being weak enough to be made the tool of designing men. But you have sense enough to know the embarrassed state your affairs were left in by your father, and to what causes such embarrassments were owing. . . . I am persuaded you are not vain enough to prefer your own judgment of men and things (young and inexperienced as you are) to those whom the law has appointed your guardian. Nor can I think so meanly of your under-

standing as to believe you so blind to your own interest as not to see that the loss of your grandmother's favour (should you by such unworthy conduct forfeit her love and affection) will, when it is too late, give you a severe and lasting occasion to repent of your folly. . . .

Consider, I beseech you, how much you will prejudice mankind against you on your first appearance in the world, if you obstinately keep your connections with these men in opposition to the advice of your guardians and friends. The most candid lookers on will attribute such highly absurd conduct to a weak head, and others to a bad heart. . . . Let me entreat you to reflect on the advantages you will have in life; that your fortune (if prudently managed) will hereafter put you on a far better footing than a more plentiful one did your father, in case you act with that becoming pride which every gentleman owes to his rank and which your father seems to have forgot. But if you let yourself down so low as to converse intimately with Mr. Harris and such persons as are connected with him, supposing he acted ever so honestly in the management of your affairs, you will then forfeit all the esteem and friendship of men of rank, and lead your life in the contemptible character of a *mere Country Squire*.

The rank and figure which my family bear in the *Great World*, may possibly put it in my power to introduce you into it at a proper time, with considerable advantage; but should you connect yourself with low people or those who entertain principles in opposition to the Government, it will be absolutely out of my power to serve you in that particular. Far be it from me to advise you against shewing a friendly and kind regard to your relations, be their circumstances ever so narrow or their station ever so private: but there is a wide difference between a kind notice and an intimate connection, and it is the latter I caution you against.

I flatter myself you will forgive the freedom I have

taken on a matter of such importance, as it proceeds solely from the dictates of a heart extremely solicitous for your present as well as your future welfare; for I am with great sincerity, Dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend.

Young Hellier's reply to this letter is not forthcoming, but as might be surmised he turned a deaf ear to its eloquence and the distant allurements of being introduced to the Great World, and spent the ensuing long vacation among the "low people" condemned by his guardian. This is shown by a dismal outpouring from Mrs. Huntback. It is impossible not to sympathise with the youth for preferring the cheerful society of boon companions to that of a cantankerous old lady who did nothing for him in spite of her protestations of affection, and only complained of and at him. Dr. Wilkes evidently took this view and gave her a sound piece of his mind, which she resented greatly, and flew to the Dean for support :

Woodhouses, Oct. 29, 1754. . . . I have parted with my grandson, but as I had so little of his company hope he is better at Oxford than in Staffordshire. This journey has been very expensive to him to add to his other extravagances. . . . He owed to some of his pretended friends he kept house at ye request of Tonym, and I am sure in great measure clothed him. The first thing I saw was a new riding coat for 3 guineas charge, next was his shirts, I am sure, with ye trimming cut off; I knew ye cloth; and ye extravagant niceness in eating and drinking, paid half a guinea hors hire for him often; what was worse putting him out of conceit with his tutor in my hearing, and more so when he had turned me out of the house, as it was solely through him. . . .

Dr. Wilkes has chid me more than I ever took from any body in my life, and said I should have

had him at Featherstone and let him had what dogs, horses, and servants he liked, and mony as he had a mind. I think this strange advice, and must I kill myself with irregularities to ruin my only child, and I could not force him there and he told me so; nor could any body force themselves into his house he did not like, so what could I do? . . . I can't see why ye Doctor should advise me to let him spend whatever he has a mind to have. He will think he may always do so. . . . Is this training up a child in ye way he should go and setting ye 5th commandment quite aside? . . . And one thing I think vastly profuse—young lads drinking french wine a crown a bottle, and I find he treats chiefly with that. Ye Doctor sais I should let him do as he will and court him as Harris does; that has engaged him to love him and dislike me. . . .

If you see ye Doctor say what you please but don't tell him what I have said of his being angry with me. I hope he designed it kind, but I don't like ye advice nor will follow it. . . . Sir Richard,¹ kind too, invited him to diner, made my grandson drunk and let him come out of his house at the expence of his life, and he was lodged at an inn till morning. This is what I must submit to and not shew any dislike, but court him and let him do what he will. . . .

Meanwhile Samuel's behaviour at Oxford was giving Dr. Kennicott some anxiety; he wrote to the Dean in January 1755 to say that "upon my return from an excursion for a few days, about the middle of this month, I was surprised to find Mr. Hellier gone from College." He came back that same evening and gave as an excuse that he had heard his grandmother had had a bad fall from her horse, and obtaining the Rector's leave "had hasted down to Featherstone, where his grandmamma joyfully received him."

¹ Sir Richard Wrottesley of Wrottesley, Co. Stafford, seventh Bart., b. 1724, m. Lady Mary Gower, daughter of first Earl Gower.

I shall write to Featherstone to-morrow and hope to find this account true," said the tutor, and added :

But indeed I begin to have great fears for him. You, Sir, are his guardian and have a right to know his conduct from me. You are also most sincerely his friend and therefore have a claim to every discovery that may be for his service and reformation. The night before I left Oxford he asked me leave to go to Beaconsfield.

" To whom ? "

" Mr. Waller."

" Why ? "

" On an invitation."

" How do I know that? But supposing it, I cannot give you leave to run into unnecessary expences by ceremonious visits."

He would fain have bullied me into compliance, but I told him roundly, " Sir, once more I tell you, and it shall be decisive, that considering what I know of your extravagance and bad conduct, I shall not give you leave to lie out of College without the order of both of your guardians. If you are determined to hasten your own ruin by eloping from College I can't prevent it; but I deny you the leave to go, as I shall never be able to answer it to your guardians, to myself, and to you hereafter, when perhaps you might charge the completion of your ruin upon my compliance. Get leave from your guardians and you shall have mine; but otherwise never ask me for I shall refuse."

At present he is grown more tractable and submissive, and this alteration for the better is owing I presume to my telling him when he boasted of his conduct—that he must not pretend to impose upon me, that I knew some parts of his conduct that had given me vast uneasiness, and ought to fill him with shame. That I was sorry to find, after what I had endeavoured to instil into his mind, that his notions of honour differed very widely from mine; that if he

was not ashamed of certain actions he had been guilty of, there was the less reason to expect his reformation. And that I now began to conclude that all the pleasure I once hoped to receive from viewing him in the world, beloved and respected as a man of virtue as well as fortune, was lost in the prospect of his speedy ruin. So much at present on this ungrateful subject.

And the learned gentleman turned with relief to the more congenial topic of a college squabble.

I presume you have seen the Vice Chancellor's ¹ *Proper Reply* to the *Defence* of our College; and if you have seen it you must have been surprised at it. He is a man of too much dignity, you see, to be *accountable*, and tells the publick every thing he did was right;—because he did it. 'Tis astonishing that in the first page he should call us *Academical Delinquents*, after having acknowledged in the presence of 5 of Us *that we had not offended against any one statute of the University!* But such English, such Latin, and such argumentation never perhaps before met together; and very few would have found his *Reply* to be at all *Proper*, if it had not been so called in the title.

Dr. Kennicott gives the impression that the high endeavours of the Fellows of Exeter were being thwarted by narrow-minded tyranny; but there was more to be said for the Vice-Chancellor's point of view than he allowed.

In the General Election the previous year there had been a fierce contest for the city of Oxford; Lord Wenman and Sir James Dashwood stood in the "Old Interest," and Lord Parker and Sir Edward Turner for the Whigs. The polling booth was set up, not as

¹ The Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Huddleston, was President of Trinity, one of the most Tory colleges in the University.

usual at St. Giles, outside the city, but close against the north wall of Exeter College. Each side afterwards accused the other of having manœuvred this for their own advantage.

The Tory plan of campaign was outlined by a Whig pamphleteer; "Did not the Old Interest on the morning of the first day of the Poll, seize every access to the front of the booths and guard it twenty men deep? Did not the same Blue Mob continue the same guard to the very last?" While the Tories retorted that the Whigs had made a deep-laid plot, for the Fellows of Exeter outwitted them. The back gate of that college opened on to the rear of the booths, and voters going in by the Turl Street gate could reach the poll in safety. The Rector and Fellows welcomed them all; and during the six days of the poll, the freeholders, "an unlettered, hungry mob," as Dr. Huddleston called them, streamed through the college and were royally feasted. When the revels were over and the "smoking, drinking, expectorating crowd" had departed, the college was left in a condition which, as described in Tory pamphlets, cannot be quoted.

In his speech at Commemoration and again at Convocation, Dr. Huddleston referred in severe terms to the behaviour of Exeter College and to the scenes that had occurred there. The Rector, Dr. Webber, wrote a "Defence," hotly denying most of the charges, though in somewhat general terms. "The modesty and good order of the freeholders was in the general remarkable; . . . many of them attended the chapel at the hours of prayer." There was "some degree of intemperance observable," but no more than was to be expected. He said the Vice-Chancellor had "no right to interfere in any affair transacted between the walls of a college;" and

accused him of being envious of the reputation and offended by the loyalty of Exeter. Dr. Huddleston, in his "Proper Reply," said that "to maintain the proper dignity of his office is a duty which the Vice-Chancellor owes to the University," and indignantly repudiated the charge of disloyalty. He was answered in a fierce anonymous address which was always credited to Dr. Kennicott, who took a leading part in the affair, on the Whig side. He was called in Tory pamphlets "Little Benjamin their ruler."

Rioting also went on at the Tory colleges among the undergraduates, particularly at Balliol and St. John's. Sam Hellier in a letter home says that "our college has had several insults from other colleges, particularly Balliol. A gentleman of that college will probably be tried for assaulting us and calling out 'King J-m-s.'" He maintains a discreet silence as to the part he and his fellow students at Exeter played, but it was not likely they were idle. The Tory colleges apparently went unrebuked; and Dr. Huddleston exacted only "a mumbled apology" to Dr. Webber from the student who shouted "King James"; for which the Rector accused him of "gross partiality."¹

In the spring of 1755 Mrs. Huntback wrote to the Dean :

I can't tell how my grandson will spend his summer. I believe in all ye pleasure he can meet and great expence. He said Lord Foley and Lord Ward had asked him to come there. I know Lord Ward wants to list him into ye Bean Clubb, which is ungenerouse as he knows I am against it. I should be glad to be advised how to manage in regard to his being with me. I don't see what occasion I have to entertain him, his

¹ The whole account of this affair is to be found in Stride's *History of Exeter College*.

servant, and a brace of geldings, and his companions. I dare not consult Dr. Wilkes; he is so angry he will be against my entertaining him upon any score.

She was probably much more afraid that Wilkes would give the same advice he had before, and kept her grievances for the Dean's more sympathetic ear. Samuel was not a well-behaved youth, but he was sorely tried.

Harris was a dishonest and vindictive individual, and that nothing apparently could be done to stop him shows the strange impotence of the law at that time. Besides his evil influence over young Hellier he tried to seize his rents, and brought lawsuits without number against Mrs. Huntback merely to annoy, and once sent at one o'clock in the morning to demand her daughter's jewels from her, which the old lady refused to give up. Notwithstanding all this she had to admit to the Dean, "As you rightly observe it's not in your power nor any body's power to assist me but a due course of law which is very expensive and tedious." Dr. Lyttelton's good nature must have often been put to the test and he was much afraid of Mrs. Huntback's tongue, a more than usually unruly member. He continually urged on her to be prudent, and insisted on her burning all his letters. He also suggested, with some reason, that many of her suspicions were merely picked up from "tatlers." "Mr. Hellier and Harris were executing something against me at ye Tallbutt in Stourbridge," is a specimen of the things she filled her letters with. Dr. Wilkes, on his part, tried in vain to make her see reason in regard to her grandson, and she complained to the Dean.

I greatly dislike his [Samuel's] finery, but never saw any of it; a fustian is good enough for me. Ye

Doctor blames me for it and for murmuring at his extravagance; says Mrs. Inge¹ is worse off; her son spends £100 a month and has a less estate; but his indulgence has not been like mine, nor his example nor precept I am sure. [The Doctor] also sais young Barber has drove his mother madd, and our great neighbour's son abroad, worse than ever. But why should we pick out ye very worst we can think of? As to Mrs. Barber she has a great flow of wit; such people can't bare disappointments so well as people of a more slender capacity. So am thankful I can bare mine as I do, but I have a great load upon my spirits I am sure, to conquer ye ungovernable passhon of immoderate love which I have laboured under so many years; and now all is gon and no return but scorn and hatred.

Harris had now done something that brought him within reach of the law, and Mrs. Huntback wished him to be arrested, but Wilkes and Dovey, the Receiver, seem to have not thought it worth while. She wrote to the Dean :

I am greatly obliged that you resent his [Samuel's] behaviour to me. I think ye Doctor does not, and now Dovey can send Harris to ye fleet he will not, and ye Doctor pleads Scripture for it, but I can't find self preservation forbid, and if he's not silenced I can't live. I could answer ye Doctor, but what's unsaid can be said any time, so I will read and construe ye Scripture my own way, and join with ye poor publican in my best performances.

After the summer vacation Samuel refused to go back to Oxford, and lived as he pleased. Among his more disreputable companions were the two sons of " Parson

¹ Henrietta, sister of Sir Richard Wrottesley, married T. W. Inge of Thorpe Constantine, Staffordshire. Her son William was High Sheriff in 1767 and a J.P.

Kaye," one of them a parson himself, and Mrs. Huntback sought Lord Ward's help in the matter.

I was obliged to write to him to remove ye Kayes; I was afraid of ye plate and other effects. Ye elder brother is ye most debauched fellow I really ever heard of, a great gamester and every thing that's vile; keeps possession at ye Woodhouses when my grandson is out, and such doings as never was heard of. Strange rendezvousing work with him and ye parson and what women they can get. But I sent to our parson, Mr. Cradock, to imploy his curate [away] from ye Woodhouses; I am sure there's duty enough at Wolverhampton; and to Lord Ward to put me in a way to drive the other way, which he has I hear been so obliging as to do, and talkt to my grandson besides.

She enclosed a copy of Lord Ward's letter of Nov. 8, 1755, in which he assured her that :

My best endeavours have not been wanting to convince Mr. Hellier of ye necessity of his returning to Oxford, but I fear they will not have their desired effect. He very civilly thanked me for my advice, but did not seem pleased with it. I am told he is very fond of one Miss Noel; she is at Stourbridge, and talks of marrying her. His guardians are ye fittest and proper people to interfere, who will have ye protection of ye Court of Chancery in case ye young gentleman refuse to do what they think most for his advantage. Mr. Harris under ye mask of friendship is I fear his greatest enemy. I much lament his unfortunate situation and heartily wish it were in my power to extract him out of it.

Mrs. Huntback added for the Dean's enlightenment :
" This sad affair with Miss Noel was begun ye first Tory litchfield races, and carried on by his gardnor and I fear another, but now she has removed herself

to Stourbridge, fond fool, to be upon ye catch to meet him; and Mr. Foley deep in ye plott I hear; he is her relation."

She made up her mind they would marry at any moment, but upon the Dean with patient impatience referring her to the law concerning the marriage of minors, she admitted that :

Posably I might have made myself more easy about Miss Noel's affaor had I consulted ye Mariage Act, but as he keeps a rake parson in ye house that brought a young Cambridge scolar home with him and married him to his sister that day I was to wait of you at Hagley, and there was a bustle about it, but ye young man swore he was going of twenty two so there was an end; also I heard he was advised by Parson Kay he might marry if he'd go into France, so did not know what lengths he would runn, nor don't yet, for I thought it my duty to tell him my thoughts. He wrot me word he had no thoughts of a wife but whenever he had he would please himself.

Mrs. Huntback next tells of going to visit her neighbours, Sir Richard and Lady Mary Wrottesley, and Sir Richard's widowed sister, Mrs. Bendish. Sir Richard, having run through his fortune, was planning to retrieve it by taking orders. From what Mrs. Huntback says there had been words with him over heriots, as well as with Lord Ward; but the visit seems to have gone off well.

I went to wait on Lady Mary Wrottesley and Mrs. Bendish, where I expected a cold reception, but found it quite otherwise. Sir Richard sent to desire I would meet them at Godsall Church, and they took me home with them and would not let me go that night; I must hear him preach. I heard him read prayers and read a good sermon in his own library and his own habit, which I thought quite best for a

lay man. He lent me a very good sermon against self murder. I hope ye application was not to me tho' I have a train of afflictions; however a good discourse is always agreeable. No talk of heriots or relieves¹ so hope he has don with those.

Early in 1756 England was thrown into a panic by the rumour of a French invasion, and many county gentlemen hurried down to their estates to raise men for the regiments which were much under strength. Staffordshire did its share, though a county much in sympathy with the French and the Jacobites, as Mrs. Huntback hints to the Dean :

Bad times at home and abroad : Lord Stamford and most of our gentlemen of noat in this county have been very stirring, except Sir Walter Bagot, Sir Edward Littleton, and Sir John Astley : they lye still. Mr. Vernon² was so obliging to come and spend an hour with me and tell me the unhappy situation we were in : else I am not in a neighbourhood to hear any thing against ye French but what ye papers say. I am a slender polititian but must wish well to ye protestant succession.

On May 15, 1756, she tells of the death of Dr. Wilkes' wife, and other news :

He has been very generous as he had no child; has let her leave all to her own relations and buried her in a private genteel maner, and gave away a great deal of mourning at his own expence, and a new brick grave at Willenhall for her and himself. . . . Sir Richard Wrottesley is now ordained and preaches every Sunday with great aplause, and after next ordination will push hard to be Dean of Winsor as soon as may be. We have had great talk of our

¹ Reliefs were brought in by William the Conqueror and were much the same as heriots.

² Richard Vernon of Hilton, co. Stafford.

great Lord ¹ being confined for treason and his lady turned papist, but it wants confirmation. I may date great trouble from thence; encouraging my grandson going to these tory races where he first saw this girl I so much dislike,—ye bean clubb and ye blew coat Hunt.

The Staffordshire Blue Coat Hunt was doubtless the one in which the members showed their political sympathies by going out hunting with the hounds clothed in tartan, and the fox in a military red coat.²

Mrs. Huntback was assiduous in collecting county gossip for the Dean, retailing it with acrid humour “to a little amuse you from your studdys.” “We have dismal tea-table talk of four great ladys,” she tells him on one occasion, and in the summer of 1756 she says :

I paid your compliments to ye Doctor but see him very seldom; and its not to be wondered att, for ye report of ye whole neighbourhood is, and many wagers laid, that ye Doctor will be soon married; but I hope not for I am deep in that he will never marry any body. But he is really gay. The lady is Mrs. Bendish; he most assuredly likes her and persues vastly; but she’s a good patient and I think that’s all, tho’ its plain to be seen he likes her, but wise men miss it sometimes.

Mr. Ward is gone to ye German Spa, which prevents his weding, on account of his health. Miss Foley gon to London to prevent her being runn away with by a neighbour.

Dr. Wilkes did marry Mrs. Bendish a very few months after his wife’s death. According to Mrs. Huntback the newly-married couple began by giving

¹ Lord Foley.

² Stanhope’s *History of England*.

themselves airs and refusing to see visitors, but in March 1757 she announced that :

Ye lady has given out that she will see company. I know she has refused those that went, and if she dos me I will forgive her. I hear he is truely hen-peckt, if that is any argument of good sence in either. She has a handsome post chaise and fine bay horses indeed, three, 30 £ a horse, and she and ye Doctor go out a good deal. Sir Richard and they not great . . . I hear he has got into priest's orders and is ready for a bishoprick. . . .

April 18, 1757. . . . Ye Doctor I seldom see, and when I have he is in a hurry to get to his dear Fanny. I can't think matrimony has improved his friendship; however he's a good physitian and that we are happy in.

Meanwhile young Samuel was growing more and more unmanageable; he spent eight months of 1756 away from Oxford; one month he went on a tour to the Isle of Wight, and when his grandmother remonstrated, replied that he "must see ye world; and was 30 nights in 30 different beds, enough to destroy any constitution." He bullied her into lending him some money, and, against Dr. Lyttelton's advice, she gave him £100. In January 1757 she wrote that :

My grandson went to Oxford a few days after I advanced him the mony, tho' so near Xmas I thought there was little to be don but spend mony; but in a fortnight he returned to Woodhouses again, very ill. I believe it was a very severe cold, coming in late and his bed not lain in of six months. I think his tutor should have returned him to ye inn for one night till his room could have been aired, but I think his omission in paying him makes him neglect him. But ye fault is his own for I never knew he had any mony in arrear, and would he some times have

bestowed a leter on me, his monys should have been paid. His excuse too weak for a man of learning; he said our conversing was disagreeable to his pupil.

That spring Samuel went up to York for the races "or some great diversions there"; apparently at the instigation of Harris, "to be away this assizes," said Mrs. Huntback, "while more mischief is going on against me. This suit was because I made Stoper's law of his [Samuel's] quarteridge and paid Mr. Kennicott."¹ Samuel had by now forgotten Miss Noel, and while at York:

He meets with a young lady he greatly likes, and I believe they him, for he was near a month in York city, and when he returns ye gentleman [the lady's father] come with him and staid att Woodhouses near a fortnight, went to see most of his farms, got a rent-rolle of his estate, made himself acquainted with every thing. Then they came and dined with me. He's an artful cunning man as ever I saw, not fit to deal with me; Harris can do best with him I fancy. I don't find he proposes to give his daughter more than £5000, but they say she's very prity, and perhaps that must be part of her fortune. I am afraid of strangers; two hundred miles is too far to fetch a wife, but he seems to like her.

This gentleman told Mr. Hellier he should hear from him before he came again, and was, I thought, by ye account he gave of him, very rude. He has wrot to London, three different people at Oxford, all over Worcester and Staffordshire for his character, and don't like it from one person above all ye rest; that's one Mr. Clare, who married a relation of yours. This gentleman's name is Croft, knows your family very well. I should be glad to know something of him. I don't blame any parent for acting with

¹ Mrs. Huntback seems to have forestalled Sam's allowance in order to do so. Stoper's Law is not to be found in Blackstone, and was probably some ancient local law.

great caution in ye disposition of a child, but this is beyond ye rules of good maners or reason.

In the following September Mrs. Huntback wrote with triumph: "One thing pleases me. I think I have broke my grandson's match; a most improper undertaking as he could have engaged in."

On November 28, 1757, the squire of Woodhouses came of age, but there were no festivities. Mrs. Huntback told the Dean on November 23, that her grandson and Harris were "to set out next week for London. I can't say but I'm glad he dos not keep his birthday at home. I can't bare such drunken doings." It was a foregone conclusion that "drunken doings" should help to celebrate any occasion, grave or gay. In another letter telling the Dean of a lawsuit Harris had brought against her, Mrs. Huntback says:

I supose Mr. Dovey informed you of my late law suit; ye most barbarouse action that ever was tried sure. When I received ye £19 by his [Harris's] earnest desire to save him a journey of 20 miles riding, and I was upon ye spott, and I really thought and still believe it to be my son in law's mony, as he [Harris] and Mr. Draper took all ye cash in ye house, and he wrot ye receipte, and in a hurry I signed it and never read it, which I own great weakness; but it was in ye dark and I was full of confusion; Mr. Hellier dead in one room, Lord Ward drunk in another, and near thirty in family to take care of, with a multitude of other troubles besides, that I scarce knew what I did. But he has paid dear for his ill gotten riches, and I hope he that provides for ye lylies and ye ravens will never exclude me [from] his care.

Samuel, now his own master, went his own way more than ever. In February 1758 the Dean received a wail from Mrs. Huntback:

He minds nothing but musick and such company, from one concert and dancing to another; last week at Birmingham, this week in his chaise and four at Chester races. He sais he must have a little pleasure now for I was such a penurious divil I allowed him nothing at Oxford to live on, that he was forced to take up mony at extravagant interest; and Harris told me I was so penurious I would have murdered him. Pray God he don't come to want; he goes ye ready road. Can I draw up no petition nor have no relieve? Mr. Dovey is not well and weary; Mr. Chester is lately married to a lady whose present fortune is £1200, so no help there at present; no relation, so must languish out my mellencholly days, stript of all comfort, only my best friends, my religion, and health to persue it, tho' very loe and weak.

Mrs. Huntback had an iron constitution, and though well past seventy, went about on horseback in all weathers.

In the course of the year 1758 Samuel again entered into a matrimonial negotiation; this time for the hand of a Miss Horton, daughter of Christopher Horton of Catton, Derbyshire, whose eldest daughter had married Sir Edward Littleton, a neighbouring squire and friend of the Hellier family. Samuel went to Catton, but upon finding how inadequate were the settlements Mr. Horton proposed to make, and how large those he demanded, he withdrew his suit. For this Sir Edward gave the young man a sound thrashing, which he seems to have threatened to repeat, for in November Samuel told a friend that he proposed leaving home, "to be out of Sir Edward's way." He had already formed fresh hopes of matrimony; this time with a Miss F., a lady not of the neighbourhood. He was also bringing a lawsuit against the baronet, who was coming to stay with Lord Ward

at Himley, next door to Woodhouses; and, says Samuel,

I fear I may stand a chance of a second whipping. I fear some plott. . . . The country is so full of the affair between Sir Edward and me that if Mrs. F. comes it will require great judgment to bring it about. It is a matter of doubt which way to proceed to harass the baronet most. . . . It is agreed to move the Court to send down a writ. . . . He stands a chance of being served while he is with Lord Ward.

Mrs. Huntback told the Dean about the Horton affair in December 1758 :

Had he married Miss Horton it would have been his total ruin; so small a fortune, so unreasonable a settlement, and so high a family, must have indon him to support. Mrs. Horton is a manager, but in a grand way of life, for I don't believe they live in any degree below Lord Ward, but a title and nine children is to numerous a family for him to ingage in, and wish he had never gon . . . but as [Mr. Horton] encouraged him he went, and now its highly resented. And Sir Edward takes up ye cudgels, but I fancy my grandson will not put up with his usage to him, but his [Sam's] illness has put a stop to his resentment at present.

May 5, 1759. . . . I imagine you have heard ye affair between ye Bart and Mr. Hellier was brought to Stafford to ye assizes, where ye judge sent for my grandson and mightily recommended peace and to make it up; ye Grand Jury ye same. But he told his Lordship, with thanks for his good advice, that the assault was of so high a nature and Sir Edward had boasted of his valour so much, that without he would as publickly beg his pardon and let him put it in the papers, as its so much known in town and country, he never would make it up. So that Sir Edward refused, tho' owned it was wrong, so its removed into ye King's Bench. I think he has

exposed himself, and Mr. Horton too, to breed his daughter so gay and can give her but one thousand pounds, and demand more than tenn.

The case came on in September, but Mrs. Huntback merely said :

Ye Bart was very hard upon me in Court and said I was a worthless woman. Ye judge told him that was malice; he would hear no more if that was all ye defence he could make. It don't ye least move me; sure I am he won't spoyle my marriage, nor can ye whole world charge me with injustice; but for merit I don't in the least boast, but value him as he dos me.

Miss F. had evidently refused Sam in consequence of the broil. Mrs. Huntback went on to tell some local news.

They have gathered a very large sume for ye new church that was fired, but Lord Ward will give nothing because ye Earl of Stamford has ye presentation; a kind compliment. Sir Richard has given 20 gineas towards ye new church, but when he will get so much from any church don't know, but hear he expects our Deanery which is 1200£ a year.¹

September 1759. . . . Our neighbourhood is stirring about elections, but as I have nothing to do in ye affair don't partake of there venison, which flies about. Great company at Hilton—24 horses, 24 servants, besides two lords and three or four of there ladies, and ye gentlemen with them.

July 1760. . . . We have had Bishop Cornwallis² att Wolverhampton three dayes; first to consecrate ye new church and then to confirm in ye old: six thousand, five hundred and odd. Its said that things were performed with great deacency. Ye

¹ Sir Richard was made a royal chaplain in 1763 and Dean of Worcester in 1765.

² Bishop of Lichfield, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury.

surogate read most of ye prayers, ye Bishop ye Communion service, and ye parson Lord Stamford presented to ye liveing preached upon these words :—*'Surely ye Lord is in this place.'* A number of clergymen waited upon his Lordship, but one he ordered never more to preach in his diocese—young Kay, a great libertine indeed—and desired our clergyman never to imploy him. As ours is a peculiar under ye Dean, he is an affidavit man for Harris; so now he may imploy him as much as he wills.

Mrs. Huntback was evidently a terror to all her relations. She goes on to relate how :

About three weeks agoe Dean Cotes and his lady came on her return from Bath to Wolverhampton for Dr. Wilkes his advice; I fancy to little purpose, but he see her every day for half an hour, and every day a ginea. I went to him to desire he would ask ye Dean if he ever saw or heard of any deed of gift or writing left by Doctor Fowke to my Aunt Holland in trust for me. He said no, and I don't think he did; he has too good a character to conceal any such thing. I dare say it was made away before he married her. I would have had the Doctor tell him ye affair; he [the Dean] might have told his wife when she could have best born it; but ye Dr. declined it, so his friendship is not to reach me any more.

I was resolved to go myself and did, and askt for Miss Holland. She came to me but very shy, never askt me to go up and see her mother, nor to sitt down, nor call for a glass of wine, tho' at ye George, which she might have don with great safety; so I came to my own home, and am thankful for Hagar's wish. But I think I have drove her home, for I hear she setts out to day, so ye Dr. will loose seven gineas a week. For had she stayed I would have made one push for it by an attorney or some body. I could have offered her on oath as ye person told me she made ye writing away.

January 1, 1760, Mrs. Huntback sends the compliments of the season and the gossip of the countryside :

I have not been at all well of late, but am now got better. . . . Ye Dr. was in Lancashire but have quite don with him, he is so much among ye great folks, old friends are quite laid aside. Indeed he lives at great expence; he is now going to build an elegant salone for his lady by ye direction of Lady Ward, who is her darling acquaintance—and fine she lives indeed! Seventeen servants, a butler out of livery, and ruffles and every thing in ye high tast, even cards of a Sunday as is reported; but I hope what I write you won't mention, because I esteem ye Dr. as a physician not friend.

In her next letter she tells of Dr. Wilkes' sudden death.

March 29, 1760. . . . We have lost our doctor as you have heard long no doubt. . . . He has dyed immencely rich considering his father's estate was not more than one hundred and 50 a year. . . . He has left her very rich, and he is little lamented but for his judgment in physick. He was without all dispute a good physician but no charity. . . . I thought you might like to know some thing of ye maner of his death as you knew him so well. It was very suden. He was at Wolverhampton ye day he dyed and took several fees, and ye week before he rode 50 miles; so ye love of mony held him to ye end.

The year after he came of age young Hellier made friends with his grandmother, and desired "all differences might be at an end. I believe his eyes are open and he sees Harris's roagery." By September 1760 he had dismissed Harris, and had engaged another man of business to look into his affairs. Mrs. Huntback wrote to the Dean :

Thank God he is intirely out with Harris, tho' he came fawning to see him ye other day, but his new attorney, Mr. Hatsell, happened to be there. . . . This new attorney of ours seems a solid man, acquainted with business, and one that don't seem to fear Harris in ye least, and puting things in a regular maner. Now I wish I could see my grandson settled; but had he had Miss Horton he had been in gaol by this time. So high a family for such trifling fortunes; every body has not Sir Edward's fortune tho' they may have his merit.

Here the correspondence comes to an abrupt close. Perhaps Dean Lyttelton was wearied of it; his guardianship had long ended, and Sam had ceased to pay him even "the civility of a bow." In spite of the efforts of his new attorney, Harris remained Mr. Hellier's evil genius, and to the end of his life he was in legal difficulties out of which friends in turn tried to extract him; till in turn they tired of it. Music was the chief thing in his life. He built a room for that purpose in the grounds of Woodhouses, and in his portrait he is depicted clasping a roll of music. He seems to have been a weak but not really unamiable individual, spoilt by the people who brought him up. His career was more distinguished than its early days would augur. He took his degree as M.A. in 1758,¹ as D.C.L. in 1763, was a barrister of law of the Inner Temple, and in 1760 was made High Sheriff of Worcestershire, which was probably the occasion of his receiving a knighthood. Sir Samuel never married, nor did he get rid of his im-

¹ Honours were obtained without much effort at that time. A foreign writer who visited Oxford a few years later noted that "the presiding Examiner, the candidate for a degree and the three Opponents, came into the school, and amid profound silence passed the Statutory time in the study of a novel or other entertaining work."—*British History in the Nineteenth Century*, Trevelyan.

possible grandmother; she died in 1784 at the age of a hundred and three, the same year he died himself. Having no heir, he left his property to Mr. Shaw, a cousin, who was one of his firmest friends in later life. Shaw took the name of Hellier, and his descendants live at Woodhouses, now called Wombourne Woodhouse, a lovely old house near Wolverhampton, to this day.

CHAPTER X

PELHAM AND NEWCASTLE

LITTLE happened in Parliament during Pelham's administration. Few important measures were brought forward and the Opposition hardly existed. It was a period of recuperation from past struggles, and served to prepare for those to come. Pelham's policy was to maintain peace on the Continent and to reduce expenditure at home. In both these aims he succeeded, though the peace was precarious, and his efforts at economy were hampered by Newcastle, whose one idea of foreign policy was to sow treaties over Europe, at vast expense and much to his brother's annoyance. In October 1751 Mr. Pelham tells George Lyttelton of one of these treaties, and describes how he had spent his holidays, which to a modern Prime Minister would scarcely seem arduous.

Greenwich House,¹ October 5, 1751. . . . For my part I have passed the summer much to my own taste, tho' in a pretty violent manner. I have gone to London as my duty required once a week, done the business of my office, and regularly seen the King, who has enjoyed health and, I think, general satisfaction. The rest of the time has been spent here with my family, which has its pleasures, tho' not the *éclat* which the more busy part of the world enjoys. Politicks are much out of fashion excepting with those few who cannot live without them. Of consequence foreign treaties have been in agitation, and one is concluded with Saxony; that is our

¹ Pelham's wife was ranger of Greenwich Park.

Minister has signed one *sub spe rati*, and we have sent it back with certain illucidations, which I don't know whether the Court of Dresden will or will not come into, and to tell you the truth I don't much care whether they do or not.

By all I hear affairs in Spain go well; there is a disposition in the Courts of Vienna and Madrid to make up their old differences and to come, under his Majesty's mediation, into a firm and cordial friendship. If this takes place substantially, it will be the best settlement of the ballance of power in Europe I have heard of for a great while.

I conclude you have heard the Parliament meets on the fourteenth of next month; we shall be ready by that time. I fear as our expences are continued our taxes must be too. I am not as yet determined. I know what is right for the publick, but the ease and temper of the people must be considered also. I could have wished that by certain reductions of expence, both ends might have been obtained; but after what passed last sessions when I saw every set of men had their favourite [illegible], I despaired of making any considerable abatement. When I see you in town you will be better able to judge what is right to do than you can do att a distance. Till then I most heartily wish you all the comfort your new scene of life opens to you, and am Dear Sir, your most affectionate and faithfull servant,

H. PELHAM.

Pelham had begun his letter with condolences on the death of Sir Thomas Lyttelton.

There was much opposition in Parliament to Newcastle's treaty, by which the Elector of Saxony was to be paid £32,000 a year to gain his vote for the election of the Archduke Joseph as Emperor. Newcastle, "in a wild incomprehensible speech of an hour and a quarter," says Smollett, defended it "as a measure of peace and economy," and said, "It is little as it is because it is so great."

Only one of Pelham's economical measures was opposed by Pitt and Lyttelton, and that was a proposal brought forward in 1750 to reduce the number of seamen in the Royal Navy from 10,000 to 8,000 men. Pitt maintained that 10,000 was the least number it was safe to have. During this debate a ludicrous scene occurred. Mr. Hampden, a buffoon descendant of the great Hampden, ridiculed Pitt and Lyttelton under the names of "Oratory" and "Solemnity." Both gentlemen were furious. Pitt "flamed with anger and nodded menaces of the highest import to Hampden," says Walpole, and in the end the Speaker had to intervene and insist that the matter should go no further; with which "Punch first and then Alexander the Great, complied."

Another time there was a stormy debate on the Mutiny Bill, in the course of which many contentious points were raised; one, according to Walpole, was "stirred up" by Richard Lyttelton, "who, having been ill treated by the Duke, has had dealings with the Prince. He discovered to the House some innovations in the Mutiny Bill of which though he could not make much, the Opposition have, and fought the Bill for a whole fortnight."

But these were no more than ripples on the surface, and on the whole the course of Pelham's administration was peaceful and uneventful. Early in 1753, however, an Act was passed that sorely disturbed its repose. This was a Jewish Naturalisation Bill, a mild measure which did little more than extend to foreign Jews settled in England the privilege of becoming British subjects, which their sons born in the country naturally were. It passed the Commons after some debate, and the Lords made no opposition at all; the Episcopal Bench strongly approved. But to the surprise and dismay of the Government, the

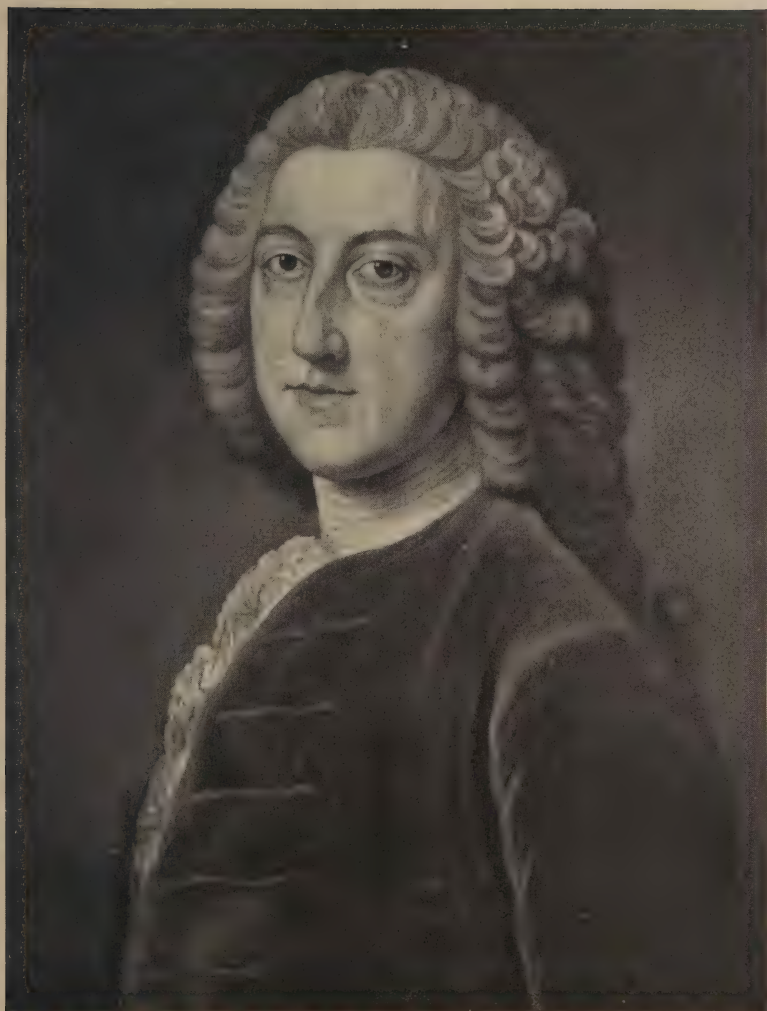
country raised an outcry, in which the clergy joined, notwithstanding the approval of the bishops. Countless sermons were preached against the Bill, and there was the usual storm of pamphlets and petitions. One of the potent arguments used was that the Act interfered with the prophecy that the Jews should be wanderers on the face of the world for ever. The question might have died down, but the approach of a General Election made the Opposition specially active in keeping it alive, and the Government, terrified at the possible result, decided to repeal the Act at the first opportunity.

When Parliament met in November, Newcastle, "with that precipitation peculiar to his character, poured forth an abrupt harangue,"¹ to introduce a Bill for its repeal, covering the Government's somewhat undignified retreat by asserting that it was a matter of little importance, merely a "point of political policy"; a phrase that was gleefully caught up and burlesqued far and wide. In the Commons the oratorical powers of Pitt and Lyttelton gave them an advantage over the Duke, but could not conceal the weakness of their argument. They had both supported the Bill, and in tones of gracious condescension now spoke for its repeal, "merely," said Pitt, "out of complaisance to that enthusiastic spirit that has taken hold of the people." Lyttelton, in one of his admired orations, strove gallantly to bring his sound Whig principles of liberty and toleration into harmony with the concessions demanded by the exigency of the moment.² He said:

Public wisdom on some occasions must give way to the popular folly especially in a free country

¹ Smollett, *History of England*.

² The whole speech is to be found in his published works.



[From the portrait at Hagley by Hoare of Bath.]

WILLIAM PITT, AFTERWARDS EARL OF CHATHAM.

where the humour of the people must be considered as attentively as the demand of the King in an absolute monarchy. . . . I am convinced that in the present temper of the nation not a single foreign Jew will think it expedient to take any benefit from the Act; therefore the repealing of it is giving up nothing. I assented to it last year in the hopes it might induce some wealthy Jews to come and settle among us; in that light I saw enough utility in it to make me incline rather to approve than dislike. But that any man alive could be zealous either for or against it I confess I had no idea. . . . What affects our religion is indeed of the highest and most serious importance. God forbid we should be indifferent about *that*! But I thought *this* had no more to do with religion than any turnpike Act we passed in that session; and after all the divinity that has been preached upon the subject I think so still.

It has hitherto been the rare and envied felicity of his Majesty's reign that his subjects have enjoyed such a settled tranquillity, such a freedom from angry political disputes, as is unparalleled in any former age. The true Christian spirit of universal benevolence has prevailed in the people and in the clergy of all degrees. But upon the passing of this Bill occasion has been taken to deprive us of this inestimable advantage. . . . It behooves the piety as well as the wisdom of Parliament to disappoint these endeavours. Sir, the very worst mischief that can be done to religion is to pervert it to the purposes of faction. . . . Another argument in favour of repeal was that "In England Church and State form one system," and by repealing this Act Sir George believed that "we shall silence that obloquy which has been most unjustly cast upon our reverend prelates (some of the most respectable that have ever adorned our Church) for the part they took in the Act this repeals. But should this safe and reasonable condescension not have the desired result," he hoped no

more would be conceded. Further concessions, he warned the House, "would be dangerous weakness in Government; it might open the door to the wildest enthusiasm. . . . If you encourage and authorize it to fall on the synagogue, it will go from thence to the meeting house, and in the end to the palace. . . . Toleration is the basis of all public quiet. A charter of liberty given to the mind is more valuable than that which secures our persons and estates."

On the other hand, he said, in his peroration, "The Bill before us I am sure is not persecution. It only puts every body in that situation where every body was easy."

The Bill was repealed, but the contingency foreseen soon arose. The religious extremists, emboldened by success, brought forward a Bill in the following year asking for the repeal of one passed in 1740 which enabled Jewish settlers in the plantations to be naturalised. Pitt thundered against it and the Bill was dropped.

In the autumn of 1753 Pitt went to Hagley, and from thence to Bath, stopping to see Westwood and Madresfield on his way. Westwood, then belonging to Sir John Pakington, he described as "a noble proud place, but as pride is generally made, the house has something little within." Of Madresfield he said, "Mr. Ligan's is enchanting beyond the banks of Thames." This is in a letter from Bath to William Lyttelton. Pitt then went on :

I rejoice to hear you are equal to your calling at Bewdley and that your flesh dos not forbid what your spirit will always prompt you to—the thing fittest to be done. I thought your affairs at Bewdley wanted a little looking after. I have not much to say of this place, having seen little but apothecaries and doctors. I am trying the waters, not very

sanguine in expecting much good from them. I have seen one ball; Italian Princes, Pope's nephews, hand in hand with Anglican bishops' daughters, women of quality without number and beauties without name.

I desire my best compliments to the Hagley fire-side. I am the humble servant of the gentle dairy and of the noisy trente at quarante.

Little did Pitt imagine as he penned this genial message that he would never see Hagley again, and that politics were soon to sever the "historic friendship" between George Lyttelton and himself.

On March 6, 1754, Mr. Pelham died. "Now I shall have no more peace," groaned George II; and there was in truth no more peace either at home or abroad for many a long year. Pelham had scarcely drawn his last breath before the scramble for places began. Hardwicke remained Lord Chancellor, and Newcastle slid almost without question into his brother's shoes; but there were other changes, and many men to be satisfied. Chief among these were Pitt and Fox. Newcastle wanted neither of them; he wished to fill his Government with amenable men of little ability who would allow him to be supreme. He was forced, however, to invite Fox to be leader of the House and Secretary of State, for he was high in the King's favour. Fox accepted, but withdrew next day on learning that the Duke meant to keep the "management" of the House, in other words, the bribing of members, in his own hands, and secret from Fox, who said that in that case he would not know how to talk to members, "when some might have received gratifications others not."

Pitt was easier to dispose of because the King still hated him, and Newcastle, while protesting that nothing else should stand in Pitt's way, could use the royal veto as an excuse for leaving him where

he was. The country, too, had forgotten Pitt during his eight years of silent allegiance to the Government, and since 1747 Pitt had sat for one of Newcastle's boroughs. So altogether the Duke hoped that he had nothing to fear from him. Hardwicke, who hated Fox, would have liked Pitt to be in high office to keep Fox down; but he was of a pliant temper and did not wish to offend the King by pressing Pitt's claims. But Pitt was determined to obtain promotion, and he knew that Newcastle could force the King to accept him, as he had been forced to accept him before.

Unluckily, while the new Ministry was being formed, Pitt was laid up with gout at Bath, and he had to leave his cause to Sir George Lyttelton and the Grenville brothers. It must have been maddening for him to be away, as, though it was usual at that time for negotiations to be started through third persons, they could not well carry them through; and Pitt's emissaries were not of the most skilful, nor were the instructions he sent for their guidance easy to follow. He continually impressed upon Temple¹ to speak "civilly," by no means that Earl's invariable custom. For this reason perhaps Pitt chose Lyttelton to be his chief spokesman, though to Temple he expressed his "apprehensions of Sir George's want of discretion and address in such soundings as will be and have been made upon him in regard to the disposition of his friends. . . . Let me recommend to my dear Lord to preach prudence and reserve to our

¹ Richard Grenville had become Viscount Cobham on the death of his uncle in 1749, and had lately succeeded his mother, who had been made Countess Temple. He was now owner of Stowe. In the House of Commons Grenville had been, says Walpole, "the absolute creature of Pitt, vehement in whatever faction he was engaged, and as mischievous as his understanding would let him be, which is not saying he was very bad."

friend Sir George, and if he can, inspire him with his own."

But the true reason for Pitt's concern was that he knew Lyttelton, alone among the Cousinhood, was a firm supporter of the new Prime Minister and that he would, therefore, be inclined to smooth difficulties rather than raise them. In the same letter to Temple, Pitt spoke highly of the Chancellor's "wisdom, temper and authority. . . . The Duke of Newcastle alone is feeble: this not to Sir George." However, in his first letter to Lyttelton on March 10, marked "Secret," Pitt said :

I am much obliged to you for your dispatch, and am highly satisfied with the necessary reserve you have kept with respect to the dispositions of yourself and friends. . . . I am far from meaning to recommend a sullen, dark, much less a double conduct : all I mean is to lay down a plan to ourselves : which is, to support the King's government in present, and maintain the Princess's authority and power in a future contingency.¹ As a necessary consequence of this system, I wish to see as little power in Fox's hands as possible because he is incompatible with the main part and indeed of the whole of this plan : but I mean not to open myself to whoever pleases to sound my dispositions, with regard to persons especially, and by premature declarations deprive ourselves of the only chance we have of deriving any consideration to ourselves from the mutual fears and animosities of different factions in Court. . . . *But do I mean then an absolute reserve which has little less than the air of hostility towards our friends (such as they are) at Court : or at least bear too plainly the indications of intending a third party or flying*

¹ This contingency was the King's death during the Prince of Wales' minority. Fox, a strong supporter of the Duke of Cumberland, would have been in favour of his being Regent, whereas Pitt and the rest wished for the Princess.

squadron ! By no means ! Nothing would in my poor judgment be so unfit and dangerous for us. I would be open and explicit (but only on proper occasions) . . . [and he repeated what he had said before as to his policy].

This and the like which may be varied for ever, is answer enough to any *sounder*. As to any things said by principals in personal conference, as that of the Chancellor with you, another manner of talking will be proper, though still conformable to the same private plan which you shall resolve to pursue. Professions of personal regard cannot be made too strongly ; but as to matter, *generals* are to be answered with *generals* ; *particulars*, if you are led into them need not be at all shunned. . . . Within these limitations it seems to me, that a man whose intentions are clear and right may talk without putting himself at another's mercy or offending him by a dark and mysterious reserve. I think it best to throw my answer to the Chancellor into a separate piece of paper that you may send it to his Lordship. I am sorry to be forced to answer in writing, because not seeing the party it is impossible to throw in necessary qualifications and additions or retractions, according to the impression things make.

As far as my dear Lyttelton, you are so good to relate your several conversations upon the present situation, I highly applaud your prudence. I hope you neither have nor will drop a word of menace, and that you will always bear in mind that my personal connection with the Duke of Newcastle has a peculiar circumstance which yours and that of your friends has not. . . .

Sir George in a memorandum on Pitt's letters wrote this note,

“The peculiar circumstances in Mr. Pitt's *personal* connexion with his Grace, which he desires me *always to bear in mind*, was his being brought by his Grace into Parliament for one of his family boroughs ; but

this he forgot soon as he did many other things declared by him in these letters."

Pitt's letter to Hardwicke was written as to Lyttelton, and is docketed by Sir George: "Ostensible to Lord Hardwicke." The Chancellor had told Lyttelton that but for the King's prejudice he would like Pitt to be Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of the House, and Pitt in his answer said that he could never "sufficiently express the high sense I have of the great honour of my Lord Chancellor's much too favourable opinion of his humble servant," but that even were his health restored and "his Majesty brought from the dearth of subjects to hear of my name for so great a charge," he would still decline that honour.

I need not suggest to his Lordship that consideration and weight in the House of Commons arises generally but from one of two causes—the protection and countenance of the Crown, visibly manifested by marks of Royal favour at Court—or from weight in the country, sometimes arising from opposition to the public measures. This latter sort of consideration it is a great satisfaction to me to reflect I parted with as soon as I became convinced there might be danger to the family from pursuing opposition any further; and I need not say I have not had the honour to receive any of the former since I became the King's servant. In this humiliating and not exaggerated view of my situation within the House, of how little weight can I flatter myself to be there? . . . Perhaps some of my friends do not labour under all the prejudices that I do. I have reason to believe they do not; in that case should Mr. Fox be Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretary at War is to be filled up.

Here he stopped, for this was the office he wanted

and hoped through the mediation of the Cousinhood to obtain; but on separate sheets of paper he added a postscript, indicating in the deepest secrecy the course of action he planned should they fail.

PS. I hope my answer to the Chancellor will not be disapproved; it contains my poor plan in the exactest limits and extent of it; and equally to this answer I should wish to form my whole conduct, and language, (when I thought proper to use any). I have not intimated, you see, any thing with regard to what consideration I might expect for myself. I think it better that should arise from themselves; at least not come from me. If they are in earnest to avail themselves of me against what they fear,¹ they will call me to the cabinet; though a cabinet office may not be practicable at the present time, in future it may not and I may be better able to undertake one. Whether they will do all they can for us I cannot tell; but their wants are so great and will infallibly grow so fast upon them, that if God grants us all health, our poor, depressed, betrayed, persecuted band, will have its weight if we keep our tempers and hold employments and act systematically, without haste and fluctuation to the great plain objects of public good. . . .

Silence is an estimable jewel in these nice conjunctures. *Little said, soon mended*, is an axiom to be writ in gold. I mean silence to persons unauthorized to question, *sounders*; frankness, with prudence, to principals who talk with authority. . . . You cannot be too carefull of these sheets, not to leave them in your pockets or drop them. Pardon all these cautions but we are beset with snares and dangers. I beg you will mend the English in my letter to the Chancellor if there are any slips.

These intricate instructions were bewildering to the

¹ The supremacy of Fox.

simple-minded Lyttelton, who left it on record that "for fear of saying anything that Mr. Pitt might think too much or too little, I contented myself with delivering his letter to Lord Hardwicke without any comment upon it, either in talking to his Lordship or to the Duke of Newcastle."

In the letter to Temple already quoted, Pitt repeated his "poor plan" much as he had outlined it to Sir George, only in a less darkly mysterious way :

The essence of which is . . . to give no terrors by talking big . . . to leave them under the impression of their own fears and resentments, the only friends we shall ever have at Court. . . . Their fears will increase by what we *avoid saying* concerning persons, (though what I think of Fox etc. is much fixed) . . . to wait the workings of all these things in offices, the best we have, but in office.

He left no stone unturned in his efforts to strengthen their faction, though he usually scorned social amenities to gain favour.

Give me leave to recommend to your Lordship a little gathering of friends about you at dinners, without ostentation. Some attention to Sir Richard Lyttelton, I should think proper: a dinner to the Yorkes very seasonable: and before things are settled, any of the Princess's court. . . . In short *liez commerce* with as many members of Parliament who may be open to our purpose as your Lordship can. Pardon, my dear Lord, all this freedom, but the conjuncture is made to awaken men and there is room for action. I cannot express my impatience to be with you.

All was in vain; Fox remained Secretary at War, Legge was made Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir

Thomas Robinson and Lord Holderness, two non-entities after Newcastle's own heart, became joint secretaries of state, while of the Cousinhood, George Grenville became Treasurer of the Navy and George Lyttelton received the rich sinecure of Cofferer to the Household. Pitt was left Paymaster of the Forces. Sir George, knowing what he would feel, begged Newcastle and Hardwicke to write him conciliatory letters, which they did not trouble to do. After waiting some days, Lyttelton sent an express to Pitt with the news. His letter gave Pitt a sleepless night, and he wrote the next day, March 25, enclosing a letter for Newcastle which he desired Lyttelton to read, together with Temple and his brothers :

and then seal it, not with my arms or crest but with a plain head, and send it or rather carry it if you please to the Duke of Newcastle and deliver it with your own hand. I judged it upon the whole necessary to remonstrate as fully as I have done. I hope it will meet with the joint approbation of you all. My plan still continues fixed, not to quit employments; merely quitting is annihilation; quitting to disturb Government and make ourselves be felt must at this time be faction; and faction for others' benefit not our own. It must increase the present confusion and produce a system I never think right for the country.

In his letter to Newcastle Pitt made his resentment very plain, and a doubt he threw out as to whether he could continue in office "without losing myself in the opinion of the world," effectually roused Duke and Chancellor from their complacent security. Terrified lest he should go into opposition, they both hastened to assure him in the most flattering terms that everything had been done on their part to remove the royal ban. Hardwicke indeed held out hopes

that some impression had been made upon the King, giving as a proof the promotion of two of Pitt's closest friends. "I agree that this falls short of the mark," he said, "but it gives encouragement."

No ground arises from hence to think of retirement, rather than for courts and business. We have all of us hours wherein we wish for those *otia tuta*, and I have mine frequently: but I have that opinion of your wisdom, of your concern for the publick, of your regard and affection for your friends, that I will not suffer myself to doubt but you will continue to take an active part. There never was a fairer field in the House of Commons for such abilities, and I flatter myself that the exertion of them will complete what is now left imperfect.

In other words, that if Pitt continued to be a docile member of the Government, the King would in time be induced to advance him in it. Pitt admitted to Lyttelton that Newcastle's letter was "writ with a condescension and in terms so flattering that it pains me," and that "the Chancellor's letter is the most condescending, friendly, obliging thing that can be imagined"; but his mind remained unchanged:

I am really compelled by every reason fit for a man to listen to, to resist (as to the point of activity in Parliament) farther than I like to do. I have intimated retreat and pointed out such a one in general as I shall really like. Resolved not to disturb Government I desire to be released from the oar of Parliamentary drudgery. I am willing to sit there and be ready to be called into action when the Duke of Newcastle's personal interests might require, or Government should deign to employ me as an instrument. I am not fond of making speeches; (though some may think I am) I never cultivated the talent but as an instrument of action in a country like ours.

These ideas of a man's fitness for office are changed; I wish the error may not be seen and felt too late.

An ominous conclusion; with this letter he enclosed his answer to Hardwicke, in which he went over the reasons of his exclusion from office, and saying that in consequence of them

All ardour for public business is extinguished in my mind. I succumb; and wish for nothing but a decent and quiet retreat wherein I may no longer by continuing in the public stream of promotion, for ever stick fast aground and afford to the world the ridiculous spectacle of being passed by every boat that navigates the river. . . . I see with great pleasure the regard that has been had to Sir George Lyttelton and Mr. George Grenville. Every good done to them will be at all times done to me. I am at the same time persuaded that nothing could be more advantageous to this system. Sir George Lyttelton is universally able in the whole business of the House; and after Mr. Murray and Mr. Fox, is certainly one of the very best Parliament men in the House.

Reading between the lines of his sibylline epistles it is easy to discover Pitt's real intentions, especially as he eventually carried them out. He meant to lead a faction within the Government; the Cousinhood, that "poor, depressed, betrayed, persecuted band," was to keep together and harry the ministers, as it had done years before, till Newcastle should be driven to bring Pitt in. The Grenvilles were quite ready to do this, but Lyttelton was not, and so he told Pitt when he came to London in June. In a paper docketed "Observations upon Mr. Pitt's Letters of 1754," written some years later, Sir George went over the happenings of these and subsequent days, as they appeared to him. How at this time :

Lord Hardwicke, to keep down Fox, his personal enemy, most ardently desired the advancement of Pitt as soon as the obstacles in the closet could be removed; but that was really a work of much more difficulty than Pitt's impatience would believe. An attempt to force the King to it so early as he wished, would have had no effect, (as I have frequently heard Lord Hardwicke say) but to drive his Majesty into the arms of Fox, who with a very considerable number of the Whigs was ready to support him against such a compulsion, and might probably have made his party good; Mr. Pitt's popularity not being yet acquired. Whereas his Lordship made no doubt that if Pitt would have been quiet and friendly to the Government, the King would have been persuaded to give him the seals before the end of the year.

It was quite impossible for me as a man of honour and integrity, to join in an opposition which at the beginning of it in the year 1754, and through the ensuing session of 1755, had not even the pretence of any public cause but was purely personal against the Duke of Newcastle, to whom at the desire of Mr. Pitt himself, I had given a pledge of my friendship, by receiving from him the honourable office of Cofferer a little before. . . . Nor did I ever give the least hope in any conversation with Mr. Pitt or his friends, after I was made Cofferer, that I would come into any measures to subvert the administration of the Duke of Newcastle: but on the contrary protested very warmly against it, as no less inconsistent with my political system than with my obligations and engagements: because I thought it would tend to set up Fox, seeing that without him or the Duke of Newcastle for a colleague, it was not possible for Pitt to maintain himself long in power as things then stood.

This caused a rift between Sir George and the rest of the cousinhood, though for the time they remained, outwardly at least, on good terms; but to judge from the letters at Hagley, Pitt turned to

William Lyttelton in whose career he had ever taken an elder-brotherly interest. William had been made sub-Cofferer under his brother, and Pitt sent him warm congratulations on the occasion :

Nothing could give me greater pleasure than to hear that you are agreeably placed under your brother, except the hearing that justice had been done to your talents and virtues by the highest powers. . . . Adieu my dear Sub-Cofferer : may you in no long course of years (with Sir George's leave) come "to sleep within the chariot that you drive," for all the cares of office will be yours, while the Cofferer reposes in the shades of Hagley and dispenses his own fat bucks, as you will do those of his Majesty's parks and forests.

In August Pitt wrote from Astrop Wells, where he had gone to take the waters, comparing notes with his namesake who was doing the same at Buxton :

I hope I am leading a life of health for pleasure sure never found its way hither. I am lodged in a dungeon called the Manor House of Kingsutton : I drink water all morning and ride in the dirt of Northamptonshire all the rest of the day. As for company, there are some human creatures, or inhuman perhaps, who frequent the spring, that you would call pretty : but my conversation has not yet reached any object more animating or animated than a doctor of divinity or an archdeacon, of which there are plenty. I hope your lot is fallen in a fair field of gallantry, I mean : and that in the delightful rantum-shantum of Buxton there may be objects at whose feet you may wish to lay all the vigour and vivacity that bracing waters and restoring baths can add to the enviable store you carried thither. I am much obliged to you for the trouble you took to search for lodgings. I shall be broke to the worst by those I find here, and may perhaps venture boldly on Buxton another season.

All joy of every kind attend you : whether you desert the fair for your dogs and hawks or, which I more expect, for gentler sports you quit the savage field, pleasure and never failing success go with you ! Believe me my dear Lyttelton your very affectionate and most faithfull humble servant

W. PITT.

After this dismal sojourn Pitt went to stay with George Grenville at Wotton, where the loveliness of "deep shades of oak, softening lawns, and tranquil waters" was enhanced by the happiness that came to him there; for he became engaged to Lady Hester Grenville one day late in September. On October 22 Pitt announced the joyful news to William Lyttelton : "I cannot wait till our meeting in town to impart to you, and to the rest of Hagley by you, what I know you will kindly partake in; the happiness and honour of your friend and servant." He ended his letter "my affectionate compliments attend the inhabitants of the brown parlour"; with no mention of his old friend, which in those days of elaborate compliment meant more than it would to-day. In the midst of his happiness Pitt did not forget William's prospects. Guided, doubtless, by Pitt, the youngest Lyttelton's ambition turned upon the governorship of an American colony; and Pitt, before telling of his engagement, and his reception into the Grenville family, "whose alliance a Duke of Bedford would ambition, with every endearing and flattering circumstance of preference and joy," began his letter with saying :

I have this post given myself the real pleasure of trying to do a little justice to a merit I so truly esteem and love. I have writ to my Lord Hallifax on your subject; not that I can imagine my desires can add any weight to Sir George Lyttelton's with his Lordship,

but as a brother's delicacy might suppress part of a brother's merit, I have ventured as a friend to apply, as I was able, that justice which was best due to it. . . . I wish to hint to you a thought that occurs, in case of what I so ardently wish—your success. You must vacate your seat. Governor Grenville,¹ or rather Lord Temple for him, might wish him in Parliament. What happy effects from such a friendly offer from Sir George! Especially coming as from his own movement! Use this hint as your discretion suggests; I will intimate it to no one.

It would seem as if Pitt had the kindly intention of bringing Sir George and the cantankerous Temple together, as well as to do his young friend a good turn. The suggestion met with approval from the baronet, ever anxious, when he could, to fall in with the dictates of his imperious friend; he wrote to tell Pitt so, and, at the same time, ignoring the slight to himself, sent warm congratulations:

Nothing in my life ever gave me more pleasure than your letter to my brother. I know Lady Hester so well that I am sure the possession of her hand and heart will give you so much happiness as my affection can wish you: no friend you have can wish you more, not even her brothers. . . .

Pitt wrote in reply:

I am indeed a most happy man. You, who know what it is tenderly and passionately to love the object of your perfect esteem and entire confidence, will best be able to estimate this happiness truly. . . . The manner in which you receive my warmest wishes for your brother William's fortune and figure is most obliging. Nothing could add to it but adopting so kindly the idea I have ventured to intimate concerning Bewdley. Many, many cordial thanks to you for all

¹ Henry Grenville had returned from governing Barbadoes.

your kind wishes for my welfare in general which you do me the honour to express so largely. Accept in return of the warmest and sincerest wishes of my heart for all you wish to yourself of honour or advantage. Give me leave to comprehend all Hagley in this letter of gratefull thanks.

Your affectionate and happy friend

W. PITT.

Pitt, in a letter to Temple, Nov. 1, says: "I understood Thursday at the Bath from William Lyttelton, who has wishes and prospects of going to America, that the most obliging and, I hope, agreeable offer will be made to your Lordship in case his seat vacates." But the plan came to nothing, for William was not appointed to America for another year, by which time all intercourse between Sir George and the Grenvilles had been broken.

Pitt was married on November 16, and, after a short honeymoon, came back to London ready for the fray. Walpole describes in vivid terms how he appeared in the gallery of the House when the Berwick election petition was being discussed, and Delaval, a humorous fellow, "had thrown the House into a laughter on the topics of bribery and corruption."¹ Pitt came down with impetuosity, rose directly Delaval stopped, and, with all his former fire, said he had asked what occasioned such an uproar, and lamented to hear a laugh on such a subject as bribery! "Did we try *within* the House to diminish our own dignity, when such attacks were made upon

¹ John Wilkes, a follower of Fox, petitioned against Sir Francis Delaval, one of Newcastle's men; but in the matter of bribery there was little to choose between them. Delaval had chartered a ship to bring some of his voters to Berwick from London. Wilkes, by a larger bribe, induced the skipper to call at Bergen on his way, which brought him to Berwick too late for the poll. Wilkes had no idea which way Pitt would speak, and gave an audible gasp of relief when he found Delaval was the victim.

it from without? . . .” He hoped the Speaker would extend a saving hand to raise it: he only could restore it—and yet scarce he! He called on all to assist, “or else *we should only sit to register the decrees of One too powerful a subject.*”

This thunderbolt thrown from a sky so long serene confounded the audience. Murray crouched silent and terrified; Legge, with great humility, murmured a few words, and members gathered together talking in whispers. “And the evening of that novel day was still more tempestuous.” Backed by Fox, Pitt delivered another attack; this time upon Sir Thomas Robinson, an effete Secretary of State. Two days later Murray came in for a terrific assault, which Fox declared “made him suffer for an hour,” though delivered with such art that no public notice could be taken of it.

With his colleagues crushed, Newcastle had to look about for succour, and here came a comical but pathetic interlude; “scarce worth mentioning,” says Walpole, “but as it served to dissolve the remains of so historic a friendship as that of Mr. Pitt and Sir George Lyttelton, and brought out all the colours of some remarkable characters.”

It seems that Lyttelton had poured out to Conway his grief at Pitt’s coldness to him, even going so far as to talk of resigning his place if by so doing he could placate Pitt. All this Conway passed on to Walpole, together with his own fears about public affairs in general. Walpole thereupon mentioned “carelessly” that he knew the Duke of Bedford¹ had a mind to be reconciled to the Court, that the Duchess and her friends were eager for it; and he gave Conway leave to discuss with Sir George as to whether

¹ John, Duke of Bedford, head of a faction known as the Bedfords or the “Bloomsbury Gang.”

anything could be done with the Bedford faction. But "upon reflection" Walpole felt it was strange that he who had attacked the promotion of both Pitt and Lyttelton should "in the most distant manner negotiate their reunion," and recollected also that it was not "acting handsomely" by Fox to strengthen Newcastle. So he went off to Conway to beg him to say nothing of what he had told him; but on the way met Conway coming to him, in great perturbation. For the fat was in the fire. Sir George, struck by what Conway said, had rushed off to tell Newcastle, without consulting Conway or leaving him to "chalk out the path of reconciliation." The Duke, "with his usual hurry," said, "My dear Sir George, there is nothing I would not give to accomplish such a reconciliation."

Lyttelton, who had no qualifications for a diplomatist beyond goodwill and transparent honesty of purpose, took this as giving him power to act, went straight off to Bedford House, and without preamble, in Newcastle's name, offered Bedford *carte blanche*. To his astonishment, "the hot little Duke" flatly refused, and at once told Pitt, "who considered he had been slighted and broke openly with Sir George: the Duke of Newcastle disclaims his ambassador, and everybody laughs." So Walpole summed up the situation. "Sir George came hither yesterday to *expectorate* with me, as he called it," he told Bentley on December 13. "Think how I pricked up my ears as high as King Midas, to hear a Lyttelton vent his grievances against a Pitt and Grenvilles."

But Walpole, though he could rarely resist a gibe at Lyttelton or anyone else, was just to him in the end, saying: "Pitt and Temple resented Lyttelton's negotiating for them, though it is certain he had used

all his endeavours to serve them; but as they meant to have the sole power of serving—not to be served—they treated him as ill as if he had sold them.” Here he evidently alludes to the negotiations after Pelham’s death.

Waldegrave wrote of the cousinhood as it stood before the split: “Mr. Pitt’s followers were scarce a sufficient number to deserve the name of party, consisting only of the Grenvilles and Sir George Lyttelton. The latter was an enthusiast both in religion and politics; absent in business, not ready in a debate, and totally ignorant of the world. On the other hand, his studied orations were excellent; he was a man of parts, a scholar, and by far the honestest man of the whole party.”

CHAPTER XI

NEWCASTLE AND PITT

THE Duke of Newcastle was probably the silliest Prime Minister England has ever had. Every contemporary agrees in depicting him as the most ludicrous of men. "His mind can never be composed, his spirits are always agitated," and he lacked, says Waldegrave, "the smallest particle of that elevation of mind or of that dignity of behaviour which commands respect and characterises the great statesman." In political squibs he was nicknamed "Bubble boy." His figure was "not in itself despicable," according to Walpole, but his hurried shambling gait made him appear, said Chesterfield, as if he had lost half an hour early in the day and was spending the rest in trying to catch it up. In conversation he was lisping, confused and irresolute; he could not bear to say no, and often forgot he had made the same promise to ten people. He was neither a steady friend nor a bitter enemy. Waldegrave says that he was "tolerably well fit to act a second part"; and yet for many years Newcastle played a "very considerable part amongst the most considerable men of his time." Wherein then lay his strength?

In the first place, he had boundless ambition, tenacity of purpose, and total inability to realise that he had no abilities; also, though timorous to absurdity, he had courage of a kind. Waldegrave says of his public speaking: "His manner is ungraceful, his language barbarous, his reasoning inconclusive. At

the same time he labours through all the confusion of a debate without the least distrust of his own abilities, fights boldly in the dark, never gives up the cause, nor is he ever at a loss for words or arguments."

The other and the chief source of his power, was his vast Parliamentary interest. Electioneering and borough-mongering were the darling joys of his life; for years he had dabbled in them, and poured out thousands in bribery, though unbribable himself.¹ No detail was too small for him to manipulate, and no man too mean to cajole. At the time he became Prime Minister two-thirds of the House of Commons were in his pay and obliged to vote as he wished; and in the Upper House not a few of the lords and bishops were likewise muzzled and at heel in consequence of favours past or to come for themselves or their friends.²

He had the King's support, because he followed the King's foreign policy; and the sagacious Hardwicke was at hand to advise when things at home grew complicated. Newcastle's power, therefore, says Walpole, "had been boundless, if his fickleness had been tied down to any stability, or if his fears and jealousy could have allowed him to delegate the least part of that power." This he could not do; and he was coming upon troublous days.

France had now recovered from the last war and

¹ By the end of his political career his income was reduced by these means from £30,000 to £13,000.

² Once when not in office, Newcastle, to harass the Government, made Lord Holderness resign the Secretaryship of State, while Halifax refused high office, not having the Duke's permission to take it. Though terrified of offending the King, Newcastle told Waldegrave that, with a word, he could cause so many resignations "as would give the Court a very empty appearance." King George complained very much that the Whig nobles chose rather to be "the footmen of the Duke of Newcastle," than the friends and counsellors of their sovereign.

relations between the two countries became daily more strained. In India and America France was gaining ground. Newcastle cared little for India or America, though he ran about asking for advice, and when told that Annapolis should be defended, said hastily, "Certainly, Annapolis shall be defended; pray, where is Annapolis?" Like the one-eyed doe in the fable, he looked for danger from one point alone—the continent of Europe. Early in 1755 King George, whose main policy was to keep Hanover safe from invasion, made vain attempts to form an alliance with Maria Theresa and Frederick of Prussia. When these failed he authorised Newcastle to draw up two treaties, with Russia and with Hesse, by which, should Frederick invade Hanover, a Russian army was to advance on Prussia; and six thousand Hessians were engaged to help Hanover.

In August the treaties were ready and sent to England to be ratified. They met with intense disfavour, and Legge, who as Chancellor of the Exchequer had to sign them, refused to do so without the consent of Parliament. Newcastle was much dismayed; he had hoped to get them signed before Parliament met, dreading what Pitt would say. All through the summer he had been angling for Pitt's support, and now redoubled his efforts; with no result, for as Newcastle's difficulties increased, Pitt's demands did too. In September they had an interview, when Pitt put forth his views. He disapproved strongly of the Russian treaty, but expressed indifference as to the Hessian one, "if it pleased His Majesty." He pointed out that the real struggle with France lay in America and on the high seas. He urged that more troops should be sent across the Atlantic, and that France should be forced to a sea war. To these stipulations, added to Pitt's personal demands, Newcastle

could not bring himself to agree. To protect himself from Pitt he again invited Fox to be Secretary of State and Leader of the House. Fox accepted the offer, to Pitt's indignation; he said nothing to Fox at the time, but remembered it later.

Meanwhile William Lyttelton had gained his wished-for post and was made Governor of South Carolina. In August he set sail for America, but on the way his ship was captured by the French, in return for two of theirs taken by Boscawen in June. After being kept for a short time in France, Governor Lyttelton was exchanged with the captain of one of the French ships, and returning to England, arrived in the nick of time for a bye-election at Bewdley; "which proved very fortunate for Sir George," as "by the election of a bayliff the borough was gone, if his brother had not thus providentially dropped from the clouds to give his vote and turn the scale."¹ To Newcastle this election came as a welcome interlude in the turmoil of state affairs. When the happy result was achieved, he sent congratulations to Sir George and described his own strenuous endeavours.

Newcastle House, Oct. 2, 1755. . . . I most sincerely congratulate you upon your success at Bewdley. I did my utmost to promote it. I sent Mr. Tracy Atkins above two hundred miles to your service, contrary to the inclination of all his family. I absolutely refused to withdraw my engagement to you in favour of Mr. Bowles, tho' I hear he voted against you and though you wrote to me about him. I would have complied with the request of the Mayor if it could have been done consistently with the standing orders in the Excise Office, from which they never depart; and I owed to those who were most concerned, the obligations I had to you for your goodness to the Vice-Chamberlain. . . .

¹ Miss Mary Pitt to Mrs. Montagu: Climenson.

Newcastle then commented on the recent changes in the Cabinet. Fox was not officially to take his new office till after the Address was carried and the treaties with it, as he would have to vacate his seat and it was essential he should be there to speak for them.

I have many things to say to you at present upon the new arrangement, which is to take place at the opening of the session. This cannot be done by letter, but when I have the honour and pleasure to see you I will lay the whole before you; the rise, cause, and I may add the necessity of the measures which have been taken. I beg you would form no judgment till I see you. This I will assure you as a certain proof; what is now done was not so much as in negociation till everything else had been tried without success; but I trust to your honour not to mention this circumstance. Our publick measures are such that I am persuaded I shall be able to show you the rectitude and necessity of them. . . .

Lyttelton replied suitably; and on November 1 Newcastle wrote to thank him for his "kind, honest, and most judicious letter. I want no fresh proof of your zeal for the King and the publick; or of your sincere friendship and affection for me. I only wish to have your approbation of every step I take in my publick and private capacity." He then went plaintively over his arguments against Pitt's policy.

Things were in such a state that when I could not do what I wished, (owing to the faults of others and not my own) I was forced to do what I could. And that was my Lord Chancellor's case as well as mine, and his example is a justification in everything, but (all circumstances considered) must be particularly so in the late arrangement which has been made with regard to publick measures; I mean those of peace

and war, and the manner and means of obtaining the one or carrying on the other. When I can't do what I would, I must also do what I can. The notion of obliging France to confine the war to the sea and to America, I always thought difficult if not impracticable; and might, as it certainly will, prove dangerous to this country at last, by forcing them in a measure to give their whole attention to their marine; which they now actually do, and are, or I am afraid very soon will be, superior to us at sea.

I say, I see in these circumstances, the impossibility of supporting a war upon the continent. That impossibility has been plainly, honestly, and strongly, laid before the King this whole summer by myself and my Lord Chancellor, in a manner, I will say, no two men in England but ourselves would have done; and His Majesty has been graciously pleased to follow our humble advice. But this is not a reason why a measure which had been in negotiation for above two years, had been approved of by the King's ministers, and even spoke of in the H. of Commons with approbation—which is the case of the present treaty with Russia, (which we received yesterday signed, in the manner which had been proposed)—why such a measure, calculated for preventing a war upon the continent, should now be rejected or condemned.

I hope I shall have the honour of your company at the birthday. I don't desire from your partiality to me that you should take any thing upon trust. I will produce authentick proofs in writing of all that I say, both with regard to affairs *at home* and abroad, and there I will leave it.

The House met on November 13 for the great debate upon the Address which formally announced the treaty. The contest raged from two in the afternoon till five next morning; twenty-nine members spoke, thirteen for the Government, sixteen for the Opposition. Among the former were Fox, Murray, Sir

George Lyttelton, and W. G. Hamilton, who made his famous maiden speech; the latter included three ministers, Pitt, Legge, and George Grenville, and among private members, Sir Richard Lyttelton and Potter. Walpole, describing the debate to Conway, said that some of the speeches were very long and some extremely fine, raved of Hamilton's, and then said :

You will ask what could be beyond this? Nothing but what was beyond what ever was, and that was Pitt. He spoke at past one for an hour and thirty five minutes; there was more humour, wit, vivacity, finer language, more boldness, in short more astonishing perfections than even you who are used to them can conceive. He was not abusive, yet very attacking on all sides. He ridiculed my Lord Hillsborough, crushed poor Sir George, terrified the Attorney, painted my Lord of Newcastle, attacked Mr. Fox, and even hinted up to the Duke [of Cumberland].

In spite of this there was a solid majority for the Government, and a week later the King dismissed Pitt, Legge and Grenville. As successor to Legge, Sir George Lyttelton was appointed, and everybody rocked with laughter. "They turned an absent poet to the management of the revenue, and employed a man as visionary as Don Quixote to combat Demosthenes," cried Walpole in an ecstasy of derision; Bishop Warburton, meeting Lyttelton on his way to pay Legge a visit of ceremony, remarked dryly : "Party, like distress, obliges men to make strange bedfellows. Here's Sir George Lyttelton going to pay his respects to Mr. Legge. Mr. Legge knows only that two and two make four, and that is just what Sir George don't know."

Henry Conway, then in Dublin as secretary to the

Viceroy, wrote to congratulate Sir George on his appointment, December 12, 1755 :

I must not mix compliments of condolence for your predecessor with those of congratulation to you, but I believe we shall agree in wishing he had not been, or were not to be lost, as I doubt he will. I hear of nothing but your wars and battles in this fierce Parliamentary campaign, in which I rejoice to hear you have Providence and *le plus fort escadron* so much on your side; may it long continue ! But if a certain ally on their side becomes a principal as I apprehend, I fear their numbers will improve, tho' I hope not their fortune.

Sir George replied :

I need not tell you to whom I am so well known, that I should have thought myself a much happier man if Legge had remained in his office than in being his successor, but when he and his allies had taken such a part as made it impossible for him to continue Chancellor of the Exchequer, the offer of succeeding him was made to me in so very obliging and pressing a manner, not only from the Duke of Newcastle but also from the King, that I could not in duty and honour refuse it, being as I am entirely convinced that the measures of Government are such as I ought in conscience to support, and that every thing had been done that possibly could be done to obtain the support of those who for reasons I cannot approve, have put themselves at the head of the Opposition made to them; an Opposition from which I foresee many consequences of very great detriment and danger to the publick.

The storm rises high and beats fiercely upon me, but God forbid that to shelter myself from its fury I should run into any harbour while my friends think I can do them and my country any service by being at sea. I have this satisfaction, and a great one it is, that I find the publick in general approves of my

promotion. The King is gracious to me beyond all my hopes, and I have all the marks I can desire of the most friendly and cordial regard and support from the whole Administration.

The storm indeed beat fiercely on poor Sir George, not that any doubt of his fitness to be minister of finance seems to have crossed his mind; but his acceptance of the post was resented by Pitt and the Grenvilles "with the greatest acrimony," and destroyed the last shred of friendliness that survived the events of the previous year. Sir George poured out his feelings in a letter addressed probably to Conway, but the copy at Hagley is only docketed: "Part of a letter to a common friend on the occasion of my political quarrel with Mr. Pitt, and Lord Temple and his family in the year 1755."

You express some concern at the coldness between me and some of my friends which you say they impute to my having differed from them in my political conduct. I did, indeed, differ from them when they differed from others who were equally friends to them and me. [He went on to explain his position after Pelham's death, and how he had taken office] in conjunction with Pitt and his relations; I took it at their express desire. The only distinction between them and me is that I have adhered to it, not seeing any cause to depart from my engagements or alter my attachments. If they think they saw proper cause for altering theirs I let them judge for themselves, and should not have thought it necessary or expedient or becoming to break off our private friendship on that account, if they had not chosen to do it, very unwisely I think. You know, Sir, how much I was their friend—a friend who on all occasions has ever set their interests above his own. . . . I was their friend but I was not their retainer. I was not their bond slave. I was not obliged to follow wherever they led, against my own conscience,

against what I thought and still continue to think my honour and my duty required. . . . I do not believe any one of those gentlemen expected it of me. Certain I am I never gave them cause to conceive such a thought. I would not for all the Crown can give serve the King on such terms. . . . A parasite or a sycophant to make his court to a faction which appears very powerful, may abuse me for this, and call it if he pleases, *deserting my friends* ; but that no worthy man will think the worse of me for it I dare be confident, and therefore willingly trust my cause to your judgment.

And so the historic friendship ended. Pitt never could bear with a friend who differed from him, and when the parting of the ways came suffered little but resentment ;¹ but to Lyttelton it was an abiding sore. Their friendship could not have always run smoothly, and in early days, while his first wife lived, George had sometimes shown an inclination to rebel ; but this was overborne by his devotion to Pitt, and also, no doubt, by the prestige he gained through being Pitt's friend. Of this he was henceforth shorn. Lord Shelburne says that Pitt was the only person not in the least surprised at Sir George's subsequent failure in politics, and tells, as an instance of his self-command, how Pitt had enjoyed Lyttelton's "exclusive confidence for years and governed his conduct, with a perfect knowledge of the weakness of his character, without disclosing it." So Shelburne puts it, though weakness of character is hardly the right term, and no one who knew Sir George thought him qualified to be Chancellor of the Exchequer ; but the world laughed the louder because Pitt laughed too.

¹ Waldegrave says that Pitt "confined his society chiefly to a small juncto of relations with a few obsequious friends, who consult him as an oracle, admire his superior understanding, and never presume to have an opinion of their own."

The troubles of the new Chancellor soon began. On January 23, 1756, he brought forward his budget.¹

The matter [says Walpole] he unfolded well, but was strangely awkward and absent in reading the figures and distinguishing the sums. Pitt ridiculed and beset him; yet he made a good reply and told Pitt that truth was a better answer than eloquence; and having called him *his friend* and correcting himself to say *the gentleman*, and the House laughing, Sir George said: "If he is not my friend it is not *my* fault." Pitt was sore in his turn, and the dialogue continued with great professions of esteem from Lyttelton, of contempt from Pitt, who at last grew into good humour; but with regard to the imputation of eloquence, said he found there were certain ways of annoying certain men.

In a letter to Conway describing this debate, Walpole said that Lyttelton "stumbled over millions and dwelt pompously on farthings. Pitt attacked him warmly on negotiating the sinking fund. Sir George kept up his spirit and returned the attack on eloquence. It was entertaining enough but ended in high compliments—and the division was 231 to 56."

On February 25 Walpole tells how the Chancellor—

opened the plan of supplies and taxes for the current year. The first—a duty on wrought plate, calculated to bring in £30,000 a year; another on bricks and tiles, and a double duty on cards and dice. The actual duty produced £10,000 a year, but as doubling

¹ In January Walpole records "a warm squabble" between Fox and the Speaker, and Sir George Lyttelton and General Mordaunt, on the Act that set apart Jan. 30, King Charles' martyrdom, as a day of mourning. Fox proposed that the House should sit that day to discuss some important measure; Lyttelton supported him, but the Speaker demurred, as did General Mordaunt. Walpole says that Lyttelton had once written a letter of protest against a bishop, who in a sermon had "carried very high the respect due to that day."

the tax would not double the produce the addition was estimated at only £7,000 a year. This [said Sir George] some will think a tax on *necessaries*. The legislature calls gaming a vice, but the legislators who can best expound their own laws, seem by their practice to think otherwise. Legge objected to either tax on plate or bricks, and shewed with singular art how much greater a master he was of the nature of the revenue and commerce than his successor. Sir George seemed to repeat an oration on trade; Legge talked on it like a merchant.

Comparing the speaking of the two men, Walpole said Lyttelton's was "diffuse and majestic," Legge's "concise and pointed. Legge's speeches seemed the heads of chapters to Sir George Lyttelton's dissertations." In another letter he says: "Poor Sir George never knew prices from duties nor drawbacks from premiums! The three taxes proposed were on plate, on bricks and tiles and on cards and dice. The earthquake has made us so good that the ministry might have burnt the latter at Smithfield if they had pleased."

The tax on bricks was given up and alehouses were taxed instead. The plate tax only brought in £20,000 and was taken off before long. Sir George sent his brother an account of the debates on the Budget:

We have had some scuffles in Parliament about the Plate tax, Mr. Legge having declared that he would not oppose it at the first reading, our friends did not attend and some of his having divided the House on the question, we carried it but by two votes. This gave a great and unpleasant alarm, but we rallied our forces and had a grand debate on the second reading, in which I am told I gained some honour, and had the pleasure of carrying the question by a majority of more than a hundred. Mr. Pitt was not

there, being confined by his cold, and swelled face. Mr. Fox took his part very fairly and zealously upon the occasion.

The changes in the Government had made it no less futile than before. All through the session Pitt hurled his winged words like javelins against its cowering ranks. Murray, the timid, sat wilting with terror; Lyttelton, courageous enough, was not of the calibre to succeed in a war of words with Pitt, and any elation he felt from the commendation of his friends in daring to "combat Demosthenes," was counterbalanced by the pain such contests gave his affectionate heart; while Fox, with twice Sir George's parliamentary ability and impervious to Pitt's attacks, scored only by the mistakes Pitt occasionally made. The Government drifted on, existing by hand-to-mouth expedients, and these were beginning to fail. France was pressing England hard; and England was unprepared. As Pitt said: "We have provoked before we can defend, we have neglected after provocation, and in every quarter of the world we are inferior to France."

Early in 1756, France announced that she intended to invade England. It was but a ruse to divert England's attention, and in April an expedition set forth to take Minorca, one of England's proudest possessions; a stronghold prized more than Gibraltar. Newcastle had been warned of France's intention in February, but obsessed with the invasion scare he had done nothing, and Minorca was practically defenceless. The Governor, Lord Tyrawly, was in England and allowed to stay there. The deputy Governor, General Blakeney, though a gallant commander, was hampered by being over eighty years old, and directed operations chiefly from his bed. The Government hurried out an inadequate fleet under

Byng to protect Minorca; new regiments were raised for the defence of England, and Newcastle summoned the inevitable Hanoverians. But England was in a very bad way: panic ran through the country, and it seemed as though the Government's timid inefficiency was beginning to create the same spirit in the nation.¹

This is curiously reflected in a letter from Lyttelton to his brother, who had again started for America; a letter very unlike those of the days when he, Bolingbroke, and the rest, were asserting in rolling periods that England was on the verge of ruin and that nothing could save her if Walpole remained in power. Such statements have ever been the privilege of Englishmen, and mean usually no more than that things are moving too fast and not in the direction they expect or wish. But now the tone was different; men gathered together in groups, trying to reassure themselves, listening to every rumour and the gossip of the coffee houses.

Hill Street, April 28, 1756. . . . The Duc de Richelieu set sail for Minorca on the 12th of this month at the head of an army of 16,000 men, escorted by a squadron which according to the best accounts we can get, consists of eight capital ships of the line, two more armed *en flute* without their lower tier of guns,² and two fifty gun ships, besides three or four frigates. To oppose them, Bing and West are gone with a squadron of ten great ships of the line extremely well manned, so that the force is pretty near equal, exclusive of a small squadron under Commodore Edgecombe, which is in Port Mahon Harbour. . . . You will ask why he was not sent out with more

¹ Shelburne says of this time, "I never have been able to find there was a single man in public affairs, who did not believe that we were utterly ruined."

² *i. e.* Leaving the portholes empty like the notes of a flute.

strength. I can make you no answer but that Lord Anson thought he had no more to spare, and it was hoped he would arrive at Minorca before the French could get thither, and being joined by Commodore Edgecombe, who has two ships of the line, a fifty gun ship and two frigates, would be more than a match for the Toulon expedition, but this hope has failed by a few days. Sir John Ligonier thinks that the fort if reinforced by Byng may hold out two months. Many people here seem very confident that it will not be taken, particularly Lord Tyrawley, but I cannot help thinking M. de Richelieu would not have putt himself at the head of this enterprise if he had not in his own mind been sure of success. Blakeney and Edgecombe write with great spirit and as if they feared nothing. The first is a good officer but rather superannuated; the other is a mettled young man without much experience or knowledge. Sir Edward Hawke is cruising off of Brest with a fleet of sixteen ships of the line. Some say the French have as many there, ready to sail; but Lord Anson does not believe it.

Our new regiments are completed by the assistance of the Lords Lieutenant of their several counties,¹ and to add to our regular disciplined troops, the Parliament has not only approved of the requisition His Majesty had made of his Hessians, but advised him to bring over 8,000 Hanoverians with their train of artillery, etc.

In the midst of all the confusion was Pitt, the one man of vision amongst them all, the one man with a definite policy. On the day of his dismissal he told the House "that he would give daily and

¹ "The young court lords were going to raise troops of light horse, but my Lord Gower (I suppose by direction of the Duke) proposed to the King that they should rather employ their personal interest to recruit the army; which scheme takes place, and as George Townshend said in the House, they are all turning recruiting sergeants."—Walpole to Conway, March 4, 1756.

constant attendance to add to England's strength in armies, navies, or money, and do everything in his power against subsidiary treaties. . . ." He saw that the country was losing confidence in herself, and beginning to rely entirely on hired troops. He thundered against bringing over the Hanoverians, when the Address proposing them was brought before the House. "Things were bad indeed," he said, "if this great country could neither provide for offence or defence."

Lyttelton wrote to his brother about this debate :

When the Address for the Hanover troops was moved in the House, Mr. Pitt was in the country with a swelled face, which it was thought he would gladly avail himself of to avoid that debate; but Lord Temple went down and hauled him to the House with blisters behind his ears and flannel over his cheeks. The Tories, his Lordship told him, were all to be gained by it; Sir Richard had made a great dinner for them, and this would confirm the treaty of alliance. But he was scarce seconded by any of them in the House of Commons; and when the question came into the House of Peers, every Tory Lord to a man, shied away. Lord Temple maintained the debate almost single; and Lord Winchilsea, who that day was inspired with witt beyond his usual powers, lashed him and his friends with greater severity and more cruel ridicule, than I think I ever heard upon any occasion. His Lordship replied, but made little of it, and the mortification of the day was complete. In all probability they will not long be the better with the Prince of Wales himself, for having opposed a measure so necessary and so desired by the nation for the security of the Kingdom he is to inherit.¹ But all their politicks are of a piece,

¹ King George was so overjoyed when the Hanover troops were voted that he sent for his German cook and said, "Get me a very good supper; get me all de varieties; I don't mind expense."

taken up in a heat or founded upon false or groundless presumptions.

Instead of being protected by the Hanoverians, Pitt urged that England should fight for herself, and to this end brought forward a Militia Bill, founded on one that already existed and had become obsolete.

Pitt's scheme provided for the raising and drilling of 50,000 or 60,000 men at a cost of £300,000, much less, as he pointed out, than the Government was spending on treaties and on hire.

The Bill was popular in the country, but in Parliament met with considerable opposition; Lyttelton was in favour of it, though he suspected Pitt's motives in bringing it forward. He told his brother :

The fate of the Militia Bill is yet undetermined, but I believe it will pass the House of Commons and be thrown out of the House of Lords. For my own part I must own I wish it success, more I am sure than some who brought it in and meant nothing else by it than to hurt the Administration by the unpopularity of throwing it out. There are many objections to it, and many great difficulties that will attend the execution of it, if it should pass; but I would have something attempted to putt this nation in a better and more permanent state of defence than our occasional armaments when the danger is instant, and the uncertain resource of bringing over foreign troops, can possibly give.

We flatter ourselves that you are by this time arrived in your Government. All happiness and prosperity attend you there, my dear brother.

Sir George's prophecy as to the fate of the Bill came true. He was the only minister who spoke in favour of it, which to Horace Walpole appeared "pretty homage which Sir George's awe made him pay to the genius of his offended friend, Mr. Pitt."

On May 1 Maria Theresa signed a treaty of alliance with France, and on May 29 England and France declared war. To prepare for this the Chancellor of the Exchequer moved for a vote of credit for a million on May 12. Walpole describes the debate.

Pitt made a fine lamentation on the calamitous situation of affairs and the incapacity of the ministers. He asked for what the vote was intended. If Sir George could not say for what it was designed, would he at least peremptorily say for what it was *not* designed? Still, he was of so compounding a temper, that he would assent, though votes of credit had been so much abused. He alluded to Mr. Pelham who, he said, had been dragged into foreign resources by one who had now got the treasury; compared the Duke of Newcastle to a child driving a go-cart to the edge of a precipice in which was the precious freight of the old king and his family; prayed God that the King might not have Minorca as well as Calais written on his heart; and concluded by proposing to take the words of the last vote of credit. Sir George Lyttelton answered with great modesty that the administration had not suffered by Mr. Pelham's death except by his advancement. Let it be considered who was at the head of the treasury, admiralty, chancery, &c; could it be said that we had done nothing when we had taken 8,000 French seamen? Here he would rest the whole: no one calamity had happened yet.

After him came Grenville and Fox; then Pitt again.

Pitt took little notice of Fox, only rising again to lash Sir George Lyttelton, who had called it an opposal of epithets: 'very little proper to come from him,' said he, 'whose character is a composition of epithets. But what! did we meet as an academy of compliments?' But Lyttelton had mistaken the

day, for himself, he said, had used no epithets that day. If Lyttelton would say he had no more resources, he would tell him he was incapable, and when he disclaimed having had any hand in drawing the words of the question, he saw Sir George was not at liberty to change them. Lyttelton, much hurt, but firm, cried: "He says I am a thing made up of epithets; was not this the language of Billingsgate? The world complained that the house was turned into a bear-garden. He should not envy Mr. Pitt the character of being the Figg or Broughton of it; yet if he assumed fewer airs of superiority it would do him more honour."¹ Pitt, redoubling contempt, said with a sneer: "We once lived in a road of epithets together: Lord! that my friend, with whom I have taken sweet counsel of epithets, should now reproach me for using them!" Lyttelton, he said, was a pretty poetical genius; with his pen in his hand nobody respected him more; "but what! were not Billingsgate and Broughton epithets?" He at once described Lyttelton as an *innocent*, and would have fixed the use of invectives on him. Sir George terminated the altercation and debate by protesting it was not his fault if he did not still live in friendship with Mr. Pitt.

Lyttelton told his brother of this debate:

The last session ended with a warm combat between Pitt and me; *stetimus tela aspera contra contulimusque manus*, and if I may believe the whole voice of the publick, it ended with still more advantage to me than the former which happened when you were in England. The Duke of Newcastle made his report of it to the King in these words. "Sir G. L. answered Mr. Pitt's arguments and repelled his abuse with the judgment of a minister, the force and witt of an orator, and the spirit of a gentleman." The King seemed pleased and askt Mr. Fox, who also confirmed His Grace's report, whether the House appeared

¹ Figg and Broughton were noted prize-fighters.

to be on my side. Fox told him truly that it was very much so; at which he was so good as to express great satisfaction. Nevertheless you will believe me when I say that I felt more pain in the contest than pleasure in the success, and always shall avoid the having any with him as far as I can; but if I were struck by a Hercules I would strike again.

Bubb Dodington tells of another incident on the question of the Million Bill:

May 17th I went to the Duke of Newcastle's. He would have talked about what had passed the day before in the House of Commons upon the committee of the Million Bill, which gives the Treasury the unlimited power of borrowing without limiting the rate of interest. Sir George Lyttelton's candour in opening it made him inform the House with this dangerous and unnecessary innovation, which produced a debate and division, when the Treasury rejected the limitation offered to be inserted, by one voice only. None of us were acquainted with the innovation, or of Sir George's design to go into the committee that day, so that the numbers were but thirty-six and thirty-seven. I declined talking with His Grace on the subject, telling him it was too bad.

All this time the country seemed in a state of apathy. To Newcastle, however, with his tentacles spread through nearly every borough in the land, came rumours of discontent; but these, according to Potter, a watchful member of the Opposition, were groundless. He told Pitt in June:

The fright of the Duke of Newcastle, like the rest of his frights, proceeds from his ignorance. Such is the temper of the House that if the whole business rested on Sir George Lyttelton and Lord Dupplin, the debates on the Court side would be shorter but there would not be a single vote less. . . . Hanover troops and Hanover treaties are popular throughout the

country. The almost universal language is, opposition must be wrong when we are ready to be eat up by the French.

Had the Government succeeded in averting this catastrophe, nothing could have moved Newcastle and Pitt would have continued to cry in the wilderness; but in July came the news that the French had taken Minorca. The country woke with one bound from its stupor and, mad with fury and humiliation, cried for vengeance—vengeance on the Government, vengeance on Byng. “Hang Byng or take care of your King,” rang the catchword, with which Newcastle, gibbering with terror, was only too ready to comply. “Oh, he shall be tried immediately—he shall be hanged directly,” he assured a City deputation. Reports came in daily of “almost universal uneasiness and discontent . . . the lower sort of people outrageous . . . even peers loud in their censure.”¹ In vain did Newcastle look out, like Sister Anne, for news that might stem the tide. Messengers indeed came in from every quarter, but they came on the wings of disaster. England was menaced everywhere; and Pitt was thundering at the door, and the people of England were behind him. As one man they had suddenly realised that none but he could save them.

Britannia, nodding, signifies her choice,
And hails in him God and the people's voice,

ran two lines of a poem embodying the nation's passionate demand. Pitt himself said: “I know that I can save my country and that no one else can.”

Even now Newcastle frantically held on: he still had the King's support and a faithful few in Parliament. Lyttelton's letters to his brother tell of the

¹ The infuriated populace mobbed and pelted Newcastle's coach and urged his coachman to drive him to the Tower.

struggle from the Government point of view. He wrote on August 8, 1756, and went into the cause of the loss of Minorca, exonerating the Government, and laying the whole blame on Byng; whether Byng was guilty of cowardice or want of judgment, he was not certain.

Whatever was the cause, the effect has been fatal, and should he die by the sentence of the Court Martial, which is going to sit upon him, (as he probably will, or by the hands of the mob if he should be acquitted) his death will make a poor satisfaction to his country for the mischief he has done it. You know the temper of the nation too well to suppose that their anger for the loss of Minorca will be confined to Admiral Byng. All arts are used to inflame them against the Administration and particularly against the Duke of Newcastle. His old friends, and worst enemies, are trying their utmost to make him responsible for this misfortune. The sum of their charge against His Grace I take to be this—why was not a fleet stronger than this sent to the Mediterranean a month or two sooner? The answer is, because my Lord Anson and the whole Cabinet Council were unanimously of opinion that it could not be done with any security to the coasts of Great Britain. Lord Granville declares he thought it unsafe even to send this squadron so soon. The reason is, that the French designed to invade us, that they had a squadron at Brest and Rochefort little inferior to ours in the Channel. That we had no defence but our ships to which we could trust; that we had lost a great number of our seamen by sickness, that as many were in the hospital as aboard of our fleet, and the enemy knew the state we were in as well as we ourselves. Upon the whole, as our shield was not broad enough to cover the whole body it was better to expose our limbs than our heart. This is the defence of the Cabinet Council, and they add besides that if Byng had done his duty the force

they did send would have come time enough and have been full sufficient to relieve Port Mahon. There is truth and sense in all this, but truth and sense may not be able to prevail against clamour in an affair of this nature.

However I wish there was no danger but to the Administration in consequence of this blow. The worst evil is that the nation is engaged in a ruinous war. The loss of Minorca will render it still more difficult for us to make a peace, and France will draw great advantages from it during the war; but the greatest danger of all is that the firmness of Spain to her friendship with England may possibly yield to so great a temptation.

As the ship which carries this letter may possibly be taken in her passage, I dare not write to you so fully and freely upon either our foreign or domestic affairs as I should otherwise do.

I will only add that at home all remains as it was but still more embroiled. Passion governs some persons instead of reason, and it is said that even the principal counsellors there, or he who expected to be the principal character, and cannot even endure to be less, has expressed much disgust and lost much of his credit on that account. The Queen of Hungary and he have acted much the same part; leaving their old and best friends from causeless suspicions and causeless resentments, and concerting with those whom they cannot go on with without undoing themselves.

Here he seems to hint hopefully at a split between Pitt and his followers, of whom the Grenvilles, and the Townshend brothers—George and the brilliant Charles—were the chief: but it was the Government that began to crumble. Murray was the first to go. Upon the death of the Lord Chief Justice, he demanded the post, together with a peerage. Newcastle offered all manner of bribes to induce him to stay, but Murray was determined; he had no mind, he said, to be further battered by Pitt, and Lyttelton and

Fox were left to endure this together. Sir George faced the prospect with stoicism, telling his brother on August 6 :

“My health is much better since the Parliament rose, and I hope to lay in a good stock of strength for the winter campaign. Mr. Murray will soon be made Chief Justice and a peer, so the whole stress of the battle will fall every day on Fox and me. I fear we shall have difficulty enough to sustain it *junctis umbonibus*.”

Pitt had recently strengthened his position by intervening with success in a Court fuss between the Princess of Wales and the King, for which the Princess and her son were grateful to him. Lyttelton wrote October 6 :

Our domestic affairs are mended much since I wrote to you last. The Prince of Wales is to have his family settled to his own satisfaction, Lord Bute being to be made his Groom of the Stole, which was the condition, *sine qua non*, of this treaty ; and he is also to stay with the Princess his mother. In return they are to make the proper terms of gratitude and duty and union with the King. Whether in consequence of this Mr. Pitt and his brothers will accede to the Government, I cannot tell, nor even if the Government will offer such terms to them as they can accept, or no terms at all. But the difficulty of the times and the temper of the ministry incline me to think that they would be treated with now if they are in tractable dispositions. If they remain still in opposition, it may possibly be opposition for life. One difficulty they will have in coming in now is the intemperate language talked by Pitt the last session. Strong declarations against any support to the German dominions in any event, and violent abuse of the whole Administration with whom he must act if he comes into Government, will be unpleasant impediments in his way, and not forgotten by the House of Commons.

But the Government was in a more crucial state than Sir George realised. A week later Fox threw up the seals, and Newcastle, through Hardwicke, approached Pitt to offer him Fox's place; King George reluctantly consented, grumbling, "but Mr. Pitt won't come, and he won't do my German business." Pitt certainly was in no "tractable disposition." He refused to be a prop to Newcastle, and laid down the conditions on which he was prepared to form a Government; of these the chief were—that an inquiry into past measures should be held, in which he should take a part, that last year's Militia Bill should be passed, and that he should have "full personal access to the King, and be in the first concert and concoction of measures."¹

The King would not agree to Pitt's conditions, and spent three weeks trying somehow to form an administration without him. Lyttelton, writing to Mrs. Montagu October 23, speaks of the general confusion.

That confusion is as great as the worst enemies to this kingdom can wish. . . . What will be the consequence of all this I can't tell. My fears are great for the publick; for myself I have none in any event. The worst that can happen to me is to remain in the Office I am in under the Government; but I will remain there from the same sense of honour and duty upon which I came into it, if the King and His Grace shall determine to stand the attacks made upon them. How happy are Mr. Stillingfleet and Mr. Torriano to enjoy the Madonna's² conversation, instead of hearing

¹ Another stipulation was for an inquiry into the case of an Hanoverian soldier, who had been released by the Government after being wrongfully convicted of stealing two handkerchiefs. This enraged the populace, who had now turned against the Hanoverians, and the Government, anxious to oblige, ordered the poor man 300 lashes.

² Sir George's name for Mrs. Montagu, the famous bluestocking.

the nonsensical speculations of the town on the miserable politicks of these miserable times !

Three days later, October 26, Newcastle resigned, but still nothing was settled. King George fought every inch of the way ; while Pitt, with the ball at his feet, grew more imperious. He refused to work with Fox ; everyone was surprised. He refused to work with Newcastle ; everyone shook their heads. It was inconceivable that Pitt by himself, with no estate, no money, and no influence in Parliament, could run the House of Commons, filled with Newcastle's henchmen ; at length he won the day, and was allowed to form a government. As head of the Treasury he chose Devonshire, a sound and sensible man of great possessions, but without the Parliamentary influence of Newcastle.¹ Pitt himself took the seals of Secretary of State, and on November 6 kissed hands.

The other great offices were disposed of, and then came the minor ones which were more difficult to distribute. Pitt left all the details to Temple, who kept him acquainted with the progress made.² One day, on his return home, Temple found his brother "Jemmy" and Sir Richard Lyttelton waiting to tell him of "a very disagreeable scene which had passed the preceding day betwixt them and the Townshends, which ended, however, very peaceably, and promises to go on still better, provided the post of Cofferer can be obtained for Charles." The difficulty here lay in the Duke of Leeds being already Cofferer. How-

¹ William, fourth Duke of Devonshire, was much like his father, of whom Dr. Johnson said : "He was not a man of superior abilities, but he was a man strictly faithful to his word. If, for instance, he had promised you an acorn and none had grown that year in his woods, he would not have contented himself with that excuse : he would have sent to Denmark for it."

² Chatham Correspondence.

ever, Temple went off to Devonshire and put the matter before him "in such a manner as did not seem to hurt him. He dreads the attempt of removing the Duke of Leeds, but will see what can be managed."

Pitt made a strong stand for one appointment in particular. He insisted that his late post of Paymaster should be given to his great friend Potter. This raised a flutter in the dovecot. Devonshire told Temple that he had been to lay the list of proposed appointments before the King, and had found him "ruffled." He refused to look at more than one page of the list, and "objected to Potter's promotion as a thing unheard of in the first step of his service." Temple went on through the list of unsatisfied ones :

"The Jewel Office is opened, Lord Breadalbane going to Chief Justice in Eyre. Sir Richard does not like it by any means as it is not a place of particular dignity nor of much profit." He had been offered the Comptrollership of the Household, "but that he declines from an impossibility of going through courtly attendance." Sir Richard was almost completely crippled by rheumatism. "He points to Lord Hillsboro's office; in short to anything or nothing in the kindest and most obliging manner. . . . What is to be done concerning Potter? Treasurer of the Chamber I suppose might do; but then there is no cloth left for Dupplin's coat, nor for Sir Richard's." Sir Richard was offered the Jewel Office, "which he consents to accept with reluctance—unless the Privy Council should be added to it; in which case he will be most thoroughly pleased; without it he will be pleased too, if his friends wish him to accept it."

At last all was settled, and the Paymastership was divided between Potter and Dupplin. Potter wrote to Dean Lyttelton, Nov. 18, 1756 :

I am extremely obliged, my dear Dean, for your kind congratulations. . . . It is the highest honour to me to have my name enrolled in the list of those who, if there is any salvation for this country, must be the preservers of it. This, I thank God, does not depend on any prince's favour. . . . I wish your interests had been more attended to by those whom the King delights to honour. But I know your temper; the last person you think of is yourself. E'er many days have passed I hope to kiss your hands. The hand of the man I love is more welcome to me than the royal one.¹

On November 25 Sir George sent Governor Lyttelton an account of the recent changes and future prospects of the Government. After telling of the principal office bearers, and that Lord Temple was President of the Admiralty, he says :

The rest of the Temple family are taken good care of, and Potter is joint paymaster with my Lord Dupplin, whom they have been graciously pleased to continue in his office. Some other friends of the D. of Newcastle stay in, even in considerable offices; and Fox has many friends advanced and promoted. If you ask who is first minister, I cannot inform you. I saw yesterday an intimate friend of Mr. Pitt's, who said he was; but the same day an intimate friend of the D. of Devonshire assured me that title belonged to His Grace. Mr. Fox's friends think he is out of employment but not out of power, or at least, will not be so long; and the D. of Newcastle has been

¹ In a letter of June 1759 Dr. Lyttelton makes this dry announcement : " Mr. Potter's health has been exceeding bad for a long while. About a fortnight ago he was seized with a fever, and on Saturday last departed this transitory at his seat in Buckinghamshire. Mr. P——'s great partiality for him raised a great deal of envy upon him; and indeed most people thought he was not entitled to an employment of such rank and profit." The office of paymaster was one which brought many perquisites to the happy possessor, although Pitt himself had never touched a penny of them; but it is not likely that Potter shared his prejudice.

more visited and had greater professions of attachment made to him than when at the head of the Treasury.

Men of ordinary capacity think it very strange that if Mr. Pitt was determined, from his own inclinations or those of Leicester House, to set Mr. Fox and his friends at defiance, he did not accede to the D. of Newcastle, and keep together that strength by which alone such a faction could be kept down for any length of time. But great genius is not conducted by the rules of common prudence. Fox too seems to have erred in not better knowing what would be the consequence of his own act; but he is now very skilfully availing himself of his adversary's errors.

In the mean time you may judge what has been and what is still the state of the publick. For a month past there has not been even the appearance of an administration. How much more there is now than appearance and form, is matter of doubt; but it seems to be clear that if it is not much strengthened it will not last long. For my own part I wish it may, as such frequent changes in times of such danger are hurtfull to the publick, and may be even fatal. . . .

Many particulars I could wish to inform you of, but it would not be proper. I shall, therefore, add no more than what relates to myself. My good friends were pleased to say they would *annihilate* me; but my *annihilation* is a peerage given to me by the King with the most gracious expressions of favour, esteem and approbation of my services, that my heart could desire. I have also the satisfaction to find, by many sure marks, that I go out of employment with as good a reputation, and even a better, than I came in. No publick misfortunes are imputed to me; my conduct in my late office is generally approved of; and all those whose esteem I value the most, have taken this occasion to declare it in terms very honourable to me, and beyond my deserts. In short I am as happy in this revolution as my concern

for my country, and some domestic uneasiness, will allow me to be. I wish you may gain by it; the Dean says he hears it is likely you will; nothing could give me more satisfaction. . . .

I can't help adding that the Duke of Newcastle has acted with great dignity, prudence and moderation in this revolution.

William Lyttelton and his brother Richard were close adherents of Pitt. To Mrs. Montagu the new peer wrote his intention of resuming his history :

But if instead of the history of King Henry the 2nd, I were to write the history of the last month, it would be more curious and more entertaining. What do you think of five different administrations planned in one day? . . . But I begin to feel indolence growing upon me as I approach the House of Lords, and therefore think it much wiser to speak truth of great men who lived in this kingdom six hundred years ago, than of those who are or who would be so now. And in some part of my modern history I should find a great difficulty—the discovering motives for actions which seem to have none.

The Dean and Sir Richard also sent their accounts to Governor Lyttelton, who must have often smiled at the very different light his respective brothers shed upon the situation. Dr. Lyttelton, seldom disturbed except when he heard of a vacant bishopric, was somewhat disheartened. He began by saying his eldest brother was now “out of the storm in the quiet asylum of the House of Lords”; and went on :

The D. of Newcastle *dyes nobly*, for he neither askt a pension nor a *screen*. Admiral Smith, who has been thought of for a seat at the Admiralty, will have what he likes much better, a station to his heart's content; that of the Leeward Islands or the Western

Station.¹ With regard to myself, I have good reason to hope that I shall not be forgotten by my old friends in the new administration; but had the old one continued a little longer, Lord Chancellor would have interposed in my behalf and placed a mitre on my head, so that I may think myself unfortunate in exchanging a bird in the hand for one in the bush.

The Dean's hopes were thwarted by the perversity of fate. "My Lords the Bishops wrap themselves up in their virtue and their cloaks that the severe cold has carried none of them to Heaven yet," he wrote in January 1757; "consequently your humble servant remains in *statu quo*."

Sir Richard, on the winning side, wrote in more than his usual exuberant spirits, notwithstanding a shade of doubt as to the stability of the new Government.

My dear Billy, I wish you could have been here to have enjoyed the glory that your friends (Mr. Pitt in particular) are covered with, from a conduct the most disinterested, and the most truly noble that any man or any sett of men have ever held in this country. They have been called to Government by the King and by the whole nation. They resisted the call with a firmness that will make them immortal till the noxious parts of administration that have brought this poor country both here and where you are, to the very brink of destruction were removed; nor would they take the dangerous burthen from off their unworthy shoulders, to put it on their own, till the foreign troops were agreed to be sent away, and the militia to be established, if there is a possibility of its being carried into execution.

¹ Admiral Smith's ill health did not allow him to take up a new command, and he was soon forced to give up his command in the Channel.

He went on about the proposed inquiry into the conduct of the late Government, which eventually ended in a non-committal vote, neither of approbation nor of censure.

The Tories are determined to attend one and all, and support Mr. Pitt and his friends, as the only men capable to rescue this Kingdom from approaching destruction, nor have they themselves any other motive for the support they give us, or have hinted at any terms for themselves, and are all of them as desirous as if they had places, to make free with the purse of the publick, confident as they are that the money, tho' some of it should go into Germany, will even there be employed to British purposes only.

But yet, my dear Governor, as flattering as this scene may, as I have painted it, appear to you, there are many things in perspective that I wish I could bring to your ken, and that my pen cannot express to you, nor can be committed to paper; and perhaps before this reaches you, Pitt may no longer be Secretary of State, he may be minister or he may only be called so, and some friend of Fox or God knows who, may put that crown upon His Majesty's head when he goes to the House of Lords, that my office at present entitles me to do. . . .

My dear Governor, I long to give you joy of a better Government, and if things go right, and Pitt recovers his feet and has any legs to stand upon, and Lord Halifax,¹ who still continues, with a murrain to him, where he should not be, will be tractable, why not Jamaica? In short, I am sure Pitt is the best minister you can have, and you have lost nothing in the change he has made of one brother for another who is most affectionately yours.

¹ George Dunk, second Earl of Halifax, President of the Board of Trade and Plantations. The colonies then went under the name of plantations.

CHAPTER XII

TRIAL OF ADMIRAL BYNG

THERE is at Hagley the copy of a letter from Captain Young of the *Intrepid*, giving an account of the battle off Port Mahon, written from Gibraltar. It has no date and it is not stated to whom it was addressed.

Before this can possibly reach you the account of our engagement with the French off Mahon will be published in London. What sort of one is sent we must wait until the papers come out to us to know ! You will, to be sure, be all surprised that by the express Mr. Byng sent there was not a line from any body in the fleet but his own ship. It was, I think, not only unkind but cruel in him not to give some notice of it at a council of war that was held the 24th, the resolutions of which he stole away in the night, with a small vessel in which he sent an officer to Barcelona. He might well think some of us had friends and families that would be uneasy at hearing of an engagement and not having a line. However as to who are dead, that no doubt he has sent in his publick account, so that my poor girl and the rest of my good friends will be easy on that head ; so no more of him.

In our passage up to Mahon we met a vessel who gave us intelligence that the French with 12 sail of the line, and 5 frigates, were cruising off the island ; on which we prepared for engaging them in case it proved true. Accordingly on the 19th of May in the morning (we) saw the island and stood in for the castle, who on seeing us fired briskly on the French. About 10 that morning we discovered the

French fleet and stood boldly to them, with little wind till dusk, when they tacked from us and we from them, as it was then too late to do anything.

Next morning was hazy, and there were two Tartans¹ among us who took us for their fleet. One we took, who had on board 120 soldiers from the French camp to put on board their fleet. In all there was 600 of them, which though we took no more, hindered them from going on board. By 8 we discovered the French fleet, as it cleared up right astern. When we tacked and stood to them, the wind favouring us, we weathered them, and formed the best line that ever was formed and sailed in it. They also formed very well. As we were standing to them and they to us, we being to windward of course must tack, which we did all together thro' the whole line, without one blunder or one ship missing. This was about 12 o'clock when we began to edge down to them. About one the signal was made to engage. I was the rear ship of Mr. West's division,² who led the van; and with his division put before the wind, every one of us picking out our ship according to our stations. Mine was the 6th, a 74-gun ship, the French Admiral's second.

On our first going down they fired to rake us, but were too impatient, doing us hardly any damage, being at too great a distance; and we got pretty well in with them before they had time to load all again, and then began with them. Only us six engaged, that is, the Red Division. You'll naturally ask why? It's what I can't answer. The wind that carried us down still continued and never failed the whole time; could we have made a day it was impossible to have a finer. All the advantage that a fleet could have we had, except in force where they were a trifle superior. However there astern of us he [Byng] lay with his division, and to windward, by which means the poor *Intrepid* was cut to pieces, as

¹ Tartans were small one-masted ships.

² Admiral Temple West was Byng's second-in-command.

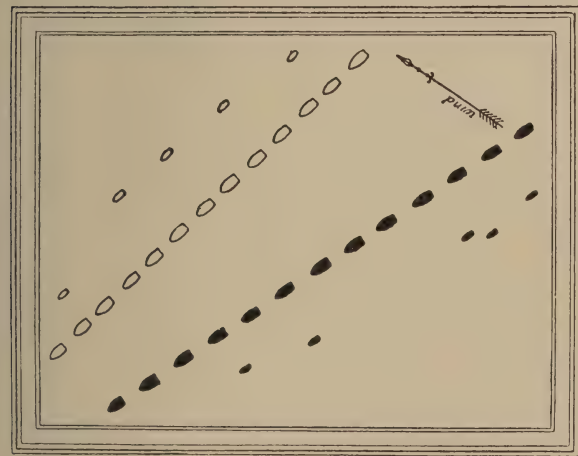


DIAGRAM I.

Byng's action, May 20th, 1756, at 2 p.m.
 British, black; French, white. (The angle of approach was somewhat greater than as shown in the plans.)



DIAGRAM II.

Byng's action, May 20th, 1756, at 2.30 p.m.
 British, black; French, white. (*Intrepid* should be flying up into the wind. She is here represented as before the wind.)

From William Laird Clowes' *History of the British Navy*, by kind permission of Messrs. Sampson Low & Co., Ltd.

I was so unlucky to lose my foretop mast in less than half an hour. But as soon as we could we cut away the rigging and set the foresail; but in this time the ship ahead of me [in] our own division, shot a good distance off, by which I was without any assistance either ahead or astern. However stood my ground; but by this accident I got the French Admiral in an 84-gun ship¹ with his two seconds on me, who soon demolished all our rigging and main topmast, so that I lay quite a wreck, besides the hull shot thro' and thro'.

This lasted at least an hour and a half. At last Captain Cornwall in the *Revenge*, and Captain Durell in the *Trident*, broke their stations from *Him* [Byng] came down, and sent [word] to me [that] if I would leave off firing they would go between me and the enemy; which they did, and then the Admiral made sail and passed me with the rest of the fleet; on which the French filled and I had no more of it. But I sent a boat to him [Byng] as he passed, to tell him my condition and that I could not keep up; when he was so very gracious, as my Lieutenant could not get into his ship, to publickly send me thanks for my behaviour, and greatly to approve of the *Intrepid*. All which he repeated 3 or 4 times, desiring the Lieutenant would tell me what he said. This was sugar after our sower sauce. He sent the *Chesterfield* to lay by us and there was very little action after this. The French as they made off fired at some of our van as they passed them.

The *Chesterfield* took me in tow that night to the So'ward, and I saw nothing of either fleet in the morning nor all that day, so as soon as I got up jury topmasts, as my lower masts would bear no others, was making the best of my way to Gibraltar but was stopt by falling in with our fleet the second day, where I have continued ever since as we have had a very long passage down. Have often been towed by the *Kingston*, as she was appointed to take care

¹ The *Foudroyant*, commanded by M. de la Galissonnière.

of me, and am to go into the Mole to refit as well as we can.

This I suppose will make fine work in England. I really believe as does everybody else that had we all engaged, by the behaviour of the French, the 20th of May, 1756, might have been recorded with as much glory to the British Fleet as the 19th May, 1692,¹ was, or more so, as they were rather superior to us; for never was a fleet in better spirits, nor, by the behaviour of those ships who did engage, and the eagerness of those who did not, to do it, that promised greater success. There are 3 more almost as much mauled as us. The *Buckingham* and *Lancaster*, tho' much engaged received but little damage; they are such heavy ships that whenever they came up the French always sheered off. The 3 ships most hurt are the *Captain*, *Defiance*, and *Portland*. Captain Andrews of the *Defiance* was killed, Captain Noel of Mr. Byng's Division lost his leg by a random shot, and, poor gentleman, is since dead. The *Defiance*, *Portland*, and *Captain*, have lost a great many men. We have lost the most of any, having near 60 killed and wounded. Some of the wounded are since dead. The surgeon's first mate was killed in the cockpit. Out of five commissioned and warrant officers on the main and quarter deck, I am the only one that came off clear. Harry I had quartered by me; he is also unhurt and behaved very well;—and this I must say, in justice to all my officers of every station and men, that they truly behaved like Intrepids, for thro' all our distresses our fire was remarked by the whole Fleet never once to stop, but always as hot as when we began.

It's odd work to be in when at it in earnest, as the poor *Intrepid* was. I now and then took a look to see if no friend would come and partake with us, for the *Foudroyant* did pelt us terribly with her heavy shot, as latterly they left off firing at our rigging and

¹ When the English and Dutch fleets defeated the French off Cape Barfleur.



DIAGRAM III.

THE BATTLE OFF PORT MAHON.

Byng's action, May 20th, 1756, at 3 p.m.

(British, black; French, white.)

From William Laird Clowes' *History of the British Navy*, by kind permission of Messrs. Sampson Low & Co., Ltd.

hulled us every time. I had fourteen shot between wind and water, and many thro' both sides. I have been horribly fatigued and fretted ever since, as are my officers that are left, [and] the ship is sickly; however rub thro' it as I keep my own health very well.

All the Fleet are open-mouthed against Byng; his own division more than ours, as well as all the land officers that were on board to be landed at Minorca: General Stewart, Col. Cornwallis, Lord Effingham, and Lord Robert Bertie. Mr. West is greatly displeased. I suppose this affair will come to inquiry. I say little; as I was sufficiently employed myself had little leisure to mind what others did. However the whole is reduceable to one short question—whether the wind that carried six of us into action could not have brought down the rest? Then why did it not? For this I have no answer, but one must be found. What is next to be done I know not.

There is a footnote to this letter in Sir George Lyttelton's writing :

When Captain Young says the French were a trifle superior in force to our Fleet, I presume he means by the weight of their metal, for we had more ships and more guns; our Fleet also was much better manned. All our seamen expressed the greatest alacrity at the sight of the enemy, and would have done their duty well if Byng had done his. The French behaved worse than usual, which I suppose was occasioned by their being ill-manned.

Lyttelton speaking for his Government was anxious to prove the failure was entirely due to Byng's inefficiency, but his arguments were not founded on fact. In point of number the English fleet was superior by one, having thirteen ships of the line to the enemy's twelve, while each had five frigates; but one of Byng's frigates was so worthless that he

had it prepared to be used as a fireship if necessary, and in all other ways the French were stronger. Their ships' hulls were clean and therefore sailed faster; they were better manned, the English crews being "very sickly," and their guns were heavier. The *Foudroyant*, 84 guns, fired a broadside of 1000 pounds, while the *Ramillies*, Byng's flagship, 90 guns, fired one of 842 pounds. The squadron Byng started with had been reinforced by a small one under Edgecumbe that had been cruising for some time in the Mediterranean, and badly wanted cleaning. The number of killed and wounded on both sides was about equal, but the French, who fought only on the defensive, suffered little damage to their ships and were ready for action next day. The English fleet had been very much knocked about, and after the engagement Byng called a council of war which decided unanimously that no more could be done for Minorca, especially as the French fleet had left, and that the only thing to do was to withdraw to Gibraltar and there refit. Byng's purpose was also, as he said in his despatch, to "cover" Gibraltar, fearing that the French fleet might make for that stronghold.¹

It was unlucky for Byng that the French account of the engagement was the first to reach England. On June 3, through the Spanish Ambassador, according to Walpole, La Galissonnière's report was made public. In this he stated that he first saw the English fleet on May 19; that they seemed "unwilling to engage"; that next day, though the English had the

¹ Richelieu had landed at Port Mahon in April, with from 14,000 to 16,000 men. The English under Blakeney numbered less than 3000. By the time Byng arrived, bringing one regiment and a few marines, the French were in possession of all the strongholds on the island, except St. Philip's Castle, the citadel of Port Mahon; and Byng saw a French flag flying from the western side of that. After a gallant defence Blakeney surrendered to Richelieu, six weeks after Byng left.

wind in their favour, they still seemed unwilling, but "at about half past 2 in the afternoon the two squadrons were in line of battle and began the engagement which went on till the English sheered off." Next day he was prepared to renew the fight, but the English had disappeared. He then made his way to Toulon.¹

The effect of the news upon England has already been described, and without waiting for Byng's account, the Government dispatched Hawke and Saunders with a squadron to relieve him and West of their commands.² On receipt of Byng's dispatch, further orders were sent to put him under arrest. His letter arrived on June 16, but was not published till the 26th; the Government in the meantime garbling it for their purpose, leaving out passages here and there so as to make him appear a coward. The word "cover," for instance, was left out before Gibraltar, to look as if Byng had simply fled to Gibraltar for refuge.

Byng landed at Spithead on August 19, and the populace was with difficulty restrained from tearing him to pieces; according to Waldegrave he was hanged in effigy in every town in England. From August to December he was kept prisoner at Greenwich, during which time he published a statement clearly proving that his letter had been tampered with, and many pamphlets were written for and against him.

The court-martial opened at Portsmouth on

¹ La Galissonnière's original dispatch is not to be found in the French archives, but it is summarized in Walpole's Memoirs, and in contemporary English newspapers. He made out that the English fleet was considerably superior to the French, and his account "does not agree in other respects with the facts as they are now accepted."—*Laird Clowes*.

² Many were scandalized at this. Walpole wrote on June 8: "The world condemns extremely the rashness of superseding admirals on no information but from our enemies."

December 27; Admiral Smith was made President.¹ Meanwhile Pitt and Temple had come into power, and on no grounds shared in the bias against Byng. "You will see by the president Temple has given him, how desirous he is that his trial may be fair and impartial," wrote Sir Richard to Governor Lyttelton; while the Dean wrote early in January: "Byng's trial is not yet finished, but all seem to think he will be acquitted. Smith I hear acquits himself to the satisfaction of every body." Byng himself was so certain of acquittal that he ordered his coach to be at Portsmouth ready to take him away.

The gravamen of the charge against him was that he had not come quickly to the support of West's division when the *Intrepid* broke down. Byng in his defence said that he could not do this because the *Intrepid* fell out of her course and got in his way; that he would have had to bear down in front of two other ships of his line which had also been forced out of their position, thus performing a manœuvre for which Mathews had been cashiered ten years before. Byng was afraid of sharing Mathews' fate, as he admitted to Gardiner his flag-captain at the time, saying, "You would not have me as admiral of the fleet run down as if I were going to engage a single ship. It was Mr. Mathews' misfortune to be prejudiced by not carrying down his force together, which I shall endeavour to avoid."

Captain Young, "one of his loudest censurers," maintained that the *Intrepid* had not got in Byng's

¹ The members of the court-martial were: Thomas Smith, Vice-Admiral of the red; Francis Holburne, Rear-Admiral of the red; Henry Norris, Rear-Admiral of the white; Admiral Thomas Broderick; Capts. Francis Geary; John Moore; James Douglas; Hon. Augustus Keppel; Charles Holmes; William Boyse; John Simcoe; John Bentley; Peter Denis; and Charles Fearn, Judge Advocate.

way, and Byng had no notion that Young would take this line, and called him as a witness in his defence. Other witnesses supported Young, but the judges, however, found that the *Intrepid* and other ships had "proved an impediment" to the *Ramillies*.

The trial came to an end on January 20, but judgment was not passed for a week, during which time "whispers got about of great altercations among the judges," says Walpole; "altercations mild and fierce." The twelve sea-captains, unskilled in law and at home only on their quarter-decks, were in a sad quandary. They agreed that Byng should have come with more speed to support West, were convinced that his failure to do so was due to an error of judgment, not to cowardice or want of zeal; yet they imagined, or more probably were assured by Byng's enemies, that an error of judgment came under the head of "negligence," and that he must be judged according to a ferocious article of war in the Mutiny Act, which ran :

Every person in the fleet who through cowardice, negligence, or disaffection, shall in time of action . . . not do his utmost to take or destroy every ship which it shall be his duty to engage; and to assist all and every of His Majesty's ships or those of his allies which it shall be his duty to assist and relieve; every such person so offending, and being convicted thereof by court-martial, shall suffer death.¹

After debating for several days they sent an express to the Admiralty to know if they might mitigate the sentence, but were told they might not. Some of them

¹ When this clause was first inserted in 1673, it ended, "or such other punishment as the circumstances of the offence shall deserve, and the court-martial shall judge fit." In 1749 this part was left out of the redrafted Mutiny Bill. Owing to the undisciplined state the Navy had fallen into, there were court-martials without end and the judges were deemed too lenient.

were for declaring him innocent, but the fierce ones finally overbore the others by promising to sign a plea for mercy, "which would certainly be listened to." The judges then found him guilty, and sentenced—

. . . The said Admiral John Byng to be shot to death at such time, and on board such ship, as the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty shall direct. . . . But as by the evidence of Lord Robert Bertie, Lieut.-Col. Smith, Capt. Gardiner, etc.,¹ that they did not perceive any backwardness in him during the action, or any marks of fear or confusion either from his countenance or behaviour, but that he seemed to give his orders coolly and distinctly, and did not seem wanting in personal courage . . . the Court unanimously think it their duty most earnestly to recommend him as a proper subject of mercy.

They then sent a special letter signed by them all :

. . . To lay the distresses of our minds before your Lordships on this occasion, in finding ourselves under a necessity of condemning a man to death from the great severity of the 12th article of war, part of which he falls under, and allows of no mitigation, even if the crime should be committed by an error of judgment only, and therefore for our consciences' sake as well as in justice to the prisoner, we pray your Lordships in the most earnest manner to recommend him to his Majesty's clemency.

Admiral Byng was not an able commander; he lacked confidence in himself, was a martinet, and his manners were cold and haughty; as one authority puts it, he was "enslaved by an habitual despondency and by a passion for routine, which made him very

¹ Lord Robert Bertie was in command of the Royal Fusiliers, the regiment sent to relieve Fort St. Philip. Colonel Smith was one of the several officers of the garrison, who were returning from leave.

unpopular in the service.”¹ But the Navy heard of his sentence with horror and indignation, and the judges who had passed it did what they could to get him reprieved.

Admiral Smith, whom Walpole called “a really humane though weak man,” wrote to his brothers George and Richard to beg their interest. Sir Richard was more than ready, but Lord Lyttelton was too firm a supporter of the late Government to take up Byng’s cause himself, though he replied sympathetically enough :

Jan. 31, 1757. . . . If you and the other gentlemen of the Court Martial have any reasons to give in favour of Mr. Byng which you have not given in your sentence and in your letter to the Admiralty, you ought to transmit them forthwith to the Admiralty, that their Lordships may lay them before the King. . . . You know my heart is inclined to mercy, but though I dare say, had I been one of his judges my eyes would have been no dryer than yours when sentence was past upon Mr. Byng, I cannot say that, without any stronger reasons than those you have mentioned in the latter part of your sentence and your letter to the Admiralty, I should have thought my conscience concerned in his being saved from the penalty contained in that sentence. If then you have stronger reasons to urge, for God’s sake lose no time but write them to the Admiralty, that they may be laid before the King. My influence can do nothing if my opinion were ever so clear; but the King’s heart is inclined to mercy, and it is the duty of the Admiralty to lay before him those grounds on which you desire it upon this occasion.

I am heartily sorry for the very painful task you have had to go through, but hear with very great satisfaction the honour you have done yourself in the

¹ Isaac Schomberg in his *Naval Chronology*.

discharge of it with so much humanity, justice, and dignity of behaviour.—Your affectionate brother,
LYTTTELTON.

Temple refused to sign the death warrant till it should be decided if the sentence was a legal one. It was referred to "the casuists of Westminster Hall" as Walpole called his Majesty's judges, and on February 15 they delivered the judgment "that," in Walpole's words, "a sentence which acquitted of two crimes, and yet condemned without specifying a third, was very good law."

Temple and two other lords of the Admiralty then signed the warrant for Byng's execution, which was arranged to take place on February 28. Few efforts had been made for Byng pending the result of the appeal; but the day it was made public, Keppel announced that he and four other judges of the court-martial¹ "had something of weight to tell," and desired to be released from their oath of silence. Keppel, though a member of Parliament, was too nervous to speak himself; he got another member to speak for him, and to ask for a Bill to be passed absolving the judges from their oath. Many spoke in support of the measure, and the House, "wondrously softened," obtained from the King a week's respite. But next day it was "blazed over the town" that the four judges denied having given Keppel the commission, "though," says Walpole, "Norris was twice on Friday with Sir Richard Lyttelton, and once with George Grenville for the same purpose!" They had been intimidated by threats from the ex-ministers as to their future promotion, as was admitted by one of them; for Walpole, who with unusual zeal threw himself into

¹ Geary, Moore, Holmes and Norris.

Byng's cause, says that Sir Richard Lyttelton himself told him within an hour after he had seen Geary to beg him to consider the injustice and dishonour of deserting Keppel, that Geary replied, "It would hurt my preferment to tell."

The real crux of the situation lay in the Government's frail hold on power. The naval officers, with their careers at stake, dared not rely on Pitt or Temple, knowing that Newcastle and his colleagues must soon come back, and the question as to whether Byng should live or die resolved into a question as to which party should win. "Hardwicke," says Walpole, "moved steadily towards his point, the death of the criminal. Fox sported with the life of that criminal, and turned mercy itself into an engine of faction to annoy his antagonist." As the legal question had been settled, the speeches for Byng in Parliament were chiefly based on a plea for mercy. One member, indeed, said pertinently, "any man who is to die has at least the right to know why he is to die"; which seemed, says Walpole, to have been totally overlooked. Nugent voiced the opinion of many by saying he thought Byng was sentenced for an error of judgment, and that the sentence was only conditional. Legge said that Byng had been made "a sacrifice for discipline, and we must not imagine that we should draw down blessings on our fleet by human sacrifices."

Pitt did his utmost to get the sentence mitigated. He spoke for Byng in the House and told the King that the House was for reprieval; but his Majesty merely replied, "Sir, you have taught me to look for the sense of my subjects in another place than the House." The country was still wild against Byng, and Pitt without its support was powerless.

Temple, who should have been able to safeguard Byng's judges, was, says Walpole, "circumscribed

both in interest and abilities from being thoroughly useful"; but he also did what he could to persuade King George to be lenient, and to this end drew a comparison of Byng's behaviour at Port Mahon with that of the King at Oudenarde, fifty years before; from which his Majesty concluded that Temple thought, if Byng deserved to be shot, he, the King, deserved to be hanged.

The Bill to relieve the judges of their oath of silence passed the Commons by a large majority, but in the Lords, Hardwicke and Mansfield spoke against it "like little attorneys." It was agreed that an inquiry should be immediately held before the Bar of the House of Lords, at which the court-martial judges could appear and state their reasons for wishing for the Bill. Hardwicke managed to get the inquiry postponed for a day;¹ but he and Lord Anson "were expeditious enough to do what they wanted in one night's time," says Walpole darkly. "The next day every one of the court-martial defended their sentence, even Keppel himself"; or rather Keppel said that he still wanted the Bill, but unless it was passed would say no more; most of his colleagues spoke to the same effect.

Walpole gives an account of the inquiry, which was held on March 2, 1757. After reporting Keppel's evidence he says :

Admiral Smith, the President of the Court, was then called; a grey-headed man of comely and respectable appearance, but of no capacity, of no quickness to comprehend the chicanery of such a partial examina-

¹ This was on a Tuesday. Hardwicke contended that Thursday must be the day for the inquiry, as an Irish bankruptcy Bill was down for discussion on Wednesday. Temple urged that the inquiry should be held Wednesday as several of the court-martial judges were under sailing orders for America. Hardwicke merely said "I adhere to Thursday"; and Thursday it was.

tion. He and the greater part of his comrades were awed too, with the presence of the great persons before whom they were brought. After remarks from Temple and Hardwicke, Lord Mansfield asked the President whether he knew any matter previous to the sentence which would show it to be unjust.

He answered : " Indeed, I do not."

Lord Mansfield : " If it was given through any undue practice ? "

Admiral Smith : " Indeed, I do not."

Lord Halifax then asked him if he desired to have the Bill. He replied : " I have no desire for it myself. It will not be disagreeable to me if it will be a relief to the consciences of any of my brethren."

Lord Halifax asked him, further, whether he could reveal anything relative to the sentence that was necessary for the King to know, and to incline him to mercy.

The Admiral said : " Indeed, I have not, farther than what I wrote at that time to Lord Lyttelton, signifying that we were willing to attend to give our reasons for signing that letter."

Lord Hardwicke asked whether he thought himself restrained by his oath from mentioning those reasons.

He answered : " The application for mercy was unanimous ; I think I am at liberty to give the reasons why I requested that mercy."

Nobody chose to ask him those questions—the friends of Mr. Byng, one must suppose, lest it should interfere with the necessity of the Bill. His enemies did not desire to know themselves, or that anybody else should. . . .

And so the Bill was rejected and Byng was shot. Walpole thus sums up his character :

By nature a vain man, son of a hero¹ and full of his own glory, and apprehensive of losing any of

¹ Admiral George Byng, 1st Lord Torrington, 1663–1733. A distinguished naval commander. He helped to take Gibraltar from Spain.

that which had descended on him. He went to Minorca, conscious of the bad condition of his ships and men, to dispute that theatre with the French on which his father had shone over the Spaniards, and he went persuaded that he should find a superior enemy. He looked on Minorca as lost. He had sagacity enough to know that if Gibraltar followed St. Philip, which he knew would be the case if he was defeated, that loss would be charged upon him. . . . This seems to have been the man. He was a coward of his glory, not of his life; with regard to that, poor man, he had an opportunity of showing he was a hero.

Byng's fate shocked even those officers who had blamed him most. Admiral West had been exonerated himself, had been made a commissioner of the Admiralty in December and given a naval command; yet on hearing the verdict of the court-martial, though his evidence had helped to condemn Byng, he resigned his posts and wrote to his cousin Temple to say :

I am fully resolved to forego anything rather than serve on terms which subject a naval officer to the treatment shewn Admiral Byng, whom the court-martial have convicted, not of cowardice, not of treachery, but of misconduct, an offence never before thought capital. Strange reasoning—to acquit him of the points *cowardice* and *disaffection*, to which that article can only have respect; since, though *negligence* is mentioned, yet it can be only intended to refer to one or other of those two causes; negligence PROCEEDING from disaffection or cowardice. I well remember this was the opinion of the House of Commons when the Bill was before them, for which reason no alternative was left in the sentence, as otherwise there would have been.

Court-martials I have always understood to be courts of honour and conscience, and therefore why gentlemen should think themselves tied by the letter

to act against their opinion, I know not; but enough of that at present.

Admiral Forbes, a lord of the Admiralty, had refused to sign Byng's sentence, and also resigned his post. Both he and West, however, returned to the Admiralty in the July following, but West died in August. He is said never to have got over Byng's death, and Charnock hints that the melancholy it threw him into was the cause of his own.

The affair made a stir even on the Continent. Voltaire, to help Byng, sent over a letter he had had from Richelieu in which he commended his opponent's conduct; but Walpole says that the letter fell into wrong hands and doubts if it was brought forward on Byng's behalf. Voltaire's own comment is famous. In *Candide* he tells of a stranger arriving in Portsmouth to find them shooting an admiral, and, on inquiry, is told, "Dans ce pays-ci il est bon de tuer un amiral de temps en temps, pour encourager les autres."

Louis XV's reception of the conquering hero, however, was little less chilling, under the circumstances, than that his brother of England accorded to Byng. When Richelieu, flushed with victory, appeared at court, his sovereign remarked, "Vous voilà, M. le Maréchal! Comment avez vous trouvé les figues de Minorque? On les dit fort bonnes."¹

The ex-ministers left no stone unturned in their efforts to dislodge Pitt. Walpole describes how the cousinhood intended to put into Byng's seat at Rochester Dr. Hay of their own Admiralty; but the King, at Fox's suggestion, told Temple that Rochester was a borough of the Crown not of the

¹ The reason for Louis XV's coldness was that Madame de Pompadour, his *Maitresse en titre*, was a deadly enemy of Richelieu.

Admiralty, nor did he like Hay or any of their Admiralty; they had represented his justice as cruelty; he would have Admiral Smith chosen there. The subject was artfully selected, a relation of their own. Temple, "with more calmness and decency than he often condescended to employ in the Cabinet, contested it long." The whole scheme was intended to get rid of Pitt and his friends, and finally Devonshire was ordered to recommend Admiral Smith to Rochester; "but the poor man, shocked both at succeeding a person he had sentenced, and at being chosen for a stumbling-block for his friends, said he had not sufficient estate for a qualification, and declined. Admiral Townshend, the gaoler of Byng, had no scruples and was elected."

CHAPTER XIII

PITT AND NEWCASTLE

PITT set forth on his administration in a way no minister had ever done before. His aim was "to call the country out of that enervate state that twenty thousand men from France could shake it"; and to the country he appealed. He drew up the King's speech with the purpose of "captivating the people," laying his plans before them and telling them how they could help. "It is in a high style *ad populum*, and seems to promise great things," Lyttelton told his brother, "but there is certainly enough of *Germany* in it, and by no means agrees with the public declarations of no *foreign subsidies*, much less with the language talked the last year." But Pitt's policy was really unchanged. He sent the Germans back to fight in Germany, raised regiments all through England to replace them there, and, with a stroke of genius, raised two Highland regiments from among the Jacobite clans and sent them oversea, where they forgot the Pretender and "where they served with fidelity, and fought with valour, and conquered for you in every part of the world," as he told the House proudly ten years later.¹

¹ The raising of the militia changed the whole face of the country. Mrs. Montagu, writing to Dean Lyttelton from Newcastle in October 1760, says: "I was sorry to see every town in my way hither look like a garrison town, and the very roads look red with militia; the reaper with his scythe makes a more pleasing figure than the soldier with his bayonet. It seemed to me as if the land had been sown with dragon's teeth and armed men had

All these things he achieved in the face of many difficulties. When first he took office a severe attack of gout completely laid him up, and cabinet councils were held at his bedside. "Since he has been minister he has been able to go but twice to the King, and is still indisposed and wrapped up in his flannels," wrote Lyttelton in January 1757. "The Bishop of St. Asaph says 'he must go out soon or he can't stay in.'"

Fox and Newcastle, with the King, were watching for an opportunity to turn him out. King George was not happy. Pitt, he told Waldegrave, made him long speeches which might be very fine but were much above his comprehension, "while as for Temple, he is so disagreeable a fellow there is no standing him." According to Lyttelton, Temple was so offensive "that his Majesty declared he would rather give his crown to my Lord than live with him another month"; and in April the President of the Admiralty was dismissed. Cumberland, who had been put in command of the army in Europe, disliked Pitt's Hanoverian policy and wanted to see Newcastle and Fox in power before he went abroad. He urged upon his father to dismiss Temple, hoping that Pitt would in consequence resign; but Cumberland reckoned without his host. Pitt wisely stayed on, and in a day or two was likewise dismissed.

The people's esteem for Pitt had been somewhat clouded by his defence of Byng, but directly he was gone they rose in their thousands and clamoured for him back. Stocks fell, the City of London gave him

sprung from them. The young squires in their scarlet, with an untaught, undisciplined, home-bred mien, make a strange appearance. I think the Yorkshire militia are to leave us in a few days, but we shall have the scarlet squires of some other county in their room, I suppose."

its freedom, together with Legge, who had been dismissed at the same time; and many big cities followed London's example. "For weeks," said Walpole, "it rained gold boxes," and for nearly three months wars raged and Parliament sat on, and there was no Government in England at all. King George in vain strove to form one without Pitt. At last, in desperation, he sent for Hardwicke, and in a week Hardwicke brought him in triumph an administration which included besides Pitt, Fox, Anson, and Newcastle.

They are all in office again [wrote Lyttelton to his brother]; two of them in the same that they were in before; and Pitt must either say that when he called them in the House (as he often did last session) *destroyers of their country*, bad heads or bad hearts, incapable ministers, *children in go-carts*, and such other appellations, he wronged them extremely, or that he can serve with knaves and fools without scruple or shame when he and his family have carried the points they have at heart. He finds, indeed, that he and his family are not able to govern the country *alone*, as he supposed they could, and so denounced war against Fox and the Pelhams with no allies but the Tories. That error he has now seen; but how will he now deserve the gold boxes which were sent him for having turned out those vile ministers? I suppose he will have thanks from the same deep politicians for having now brought them in, especially as by this time they may begin to perceive that while he was in, he did nothing else but tread in their steps and pursue the same measures they had pursued. Lord Hardwicke was pressed again to take the Great Seals, but desired to serve his Majesty out of employment, though he has been a principal agent of this reconciliation; and he has done in it as he always does, like a wise and honest man. . . .

The present plan reconciles all, unites all, and will

give all the strength to the Government that can be brought together in the nature of things. How long it will *hold together* is the great question; but if it holds together no longer than one year, it gives us some chance of saving our country. I, therefore, rejoice at it very sincerely, though I desired myself, for many reasons, to be *out of the scramble*.

Notwithstanding this assertion, Lord Lyttelton was deeply wounded. Newcastle had paid him that oblique and unsatisfying compliment too often the reward of loyalty; and throughout the negotiations, both now and in the autumn crisis, had completely ignored his faithful friend. To Hardwicke, Lyttelton unburdened his soul, and the ex-Chancellor, well accustomed to pour oil on troubled waters, thanked him for his letter which :

Breathes all that generosity and public spiritedness which has been so remarkable in your Lordship's conduct, however uncommon it may be in the present time. . . . At the same time I cannot help feeling very much concern at the impression which you seem to retain of some neglect in the Duke of Newcastle towards your Lordship. How the case stood at the beginning of last November I have formerly acquainted your Lordship with great truth and exactness; and in justice to his Grace beg leave now to inform you with equal truth, that in the new arrangement lately made, it was not in his power to include you. . . . I am intimately acquainted with the high value and esteem which my Lord Duke has for your Lordship; but to my certain knowledge there were not employments enough to satisfy such demands as were necessary to be complied with, and consequently none in any degree agreeable to your Lordship's rank could be made practicable. . . . Time and opportunity may afford new openings, wherein, I hope, what is now amiss may be corrected. In the interim the candour,

indulgence, and confidence of our friends must be relied upon.

As to the share I have had in the transaction, I never directly interposed till I had the King's positive orders from his own mouth; and ever since that time I have anxiously laboured to procure some quiet to His Majesty and some settlement for the publick.

With this intention he had, he said, thrown aside every private concern of his own, and had agreed to his son Charles not being Attorney-General in favour of Mr. Pratt; thereby giving up "a point of professional honour." His son-in-law Anson had been reinstated at the King's desire. As to the disposition of the Great Seal:

My Lord Mansfield and the Master of the Rolls were too prudent to listen to it in the present situation; the King would not give a peerage with it, which put my Lord C. J. Willis out of the question, so that it has fallen into Sir Robert Henley's hands with the style of Lord Keeper. . . . This disposition of the Great Seal not only made way for Mr. Pratt, but also for another favourite object of Mr. Pitt's, in representing the city of Bath whereof he was very ambitious. . . .

Thus things are settled for the present, and some calm and better humour restored. Happy is it that they were settled before the bad news came of the King of Prussia's defeat [by the Austrians at Kolin].¹

The fear of some such disaster, says Hardwicke, made him anxious to form a government with all possible speed, as had the news come while there was none, it would have "caused the greatest confusion, and besides," he added, "I fear the terms of the new settlement might have been greatly raised." He was also of opinion that it was necessary to put so

¹ England and Prussia had early in 1756 entered into an alliance for the safeguarding of Germany against Austria and France.

much of the "popular mixture" into the new government "as might be able to sustain some bad success, at least for the present. I say for the present, for what is unsuccessful can never be long popular."

I hope to hear that the air and exercise and amusements of Hagley have re-established your Lordship's health, and that the History of Henry II will receive its completion this summer. I was so delighted with the last, which your goodness indulged me with, that I eagerly long to be entertained with the entire piece.

To this letter Lord Lyttelton replied from Hagley, July 7, 1757. He echoed Hardwicke's doubts as to any prospect of improvement in the deplorable situation abroad, expressed satisfaction at the reinstatement of Lord Anson, and then said: "As for me, my Lord, I am at liberty to enjoy that retreat which my own temper makes agreeable and which your Lordship's friendship has made honourable to me." He said that, while he would not have refused office, he was glad not to have been offered one, and that he had "so little desire to embarrass the Duke of Newcastle that I had not even a wish for myself."

I am of your Lordship's opinion that if he had desired it he could not have done anything for me at present, but he might have expressed a desire to do it, and I think he should. Half of that which has been said by your Lordship to excuse him, if it had been said by his Grace would have satisfied me; but to have been quite overlooked in such a transaction, when every other friend he had was consulted, and every interest of each of them was consulted with the greatest attention, is a mortifying distinction, and such as I must think my behaviour towards him has never deserved. Certainly he had no cause from any part of my past conduct to apprehend that if he had shewed me more regard and more kindness, I

would by any unseasonable pretensions of mine have distrest the King's business, or have putt his Grace under any difficulties in the course of a treaty which I thought of such consequence to the settlement of the nation.

Hardwicke must have passed all this on to Newcastle, and they hastened at the first opportunity to repair the injury. In January 1758, Lyttelton wrote to his brother :

You ask if I have had any occasion to speak since I came into the Lords. Never but once, and that quite extempore upon a clause in the Militia Bill. Lord Talbot and I had a sparring, and my reply to him drew out some arguments which Lord Hardwicke did me the honour to take notice of next day as being of very great weight, and the D. of Newcastle was lavish in praise of the whole speech, but I shall not seek, and don't believe I shall find, any occasion of speaking this year.¹

I write my history but lazily, and without much of the spirit of an author upon me. I begin to grow old, my dear Billy, and am willing to *let my life sleep and learn to love its end*. However, I will not forsake the muses entirely till they forsake me, nor more serious affairs when I think I can do any good to my country or credit to myself by acting a busy part.

Dean Lyttelton had also been sadly disturbed by the crisis in public affairs, and wrote to his youngest brother, June 6, 1757 :

Lord Lyttelton has informed you of the strange revolutions in the Cabinet, which have proved as unfortunate to me in my private views as they certainly are to the publick. At that particular crisis when the D. of C. got Mr. P. and Lord T. removed,

¹ This episode may have happened before the letters above were written, but it matters not; it denotes the form in which balm would be applied.

the Archbishop died, and the Princess Emily by her brother's interest united, got Dr. Terrick the vacant bishoprick of Peterboro'. . . . His Grace of Newcastle would fain have promoted Dr. Young to Peterboro', but at that moment the D. of C. was all powerfull in Church as well as in State. My expectations are now removed to a great distance and I must be content with what I am in possession of.

Newcastle, as head of the Treasury, was for the time perfectly happy. He made bishops, disposed of minor government posts, and was courted and flattered as much as ever by Dean Lytteltons and the like; while Pitt, securely pinnaced, ruled all the rest. The nation was at his feet—and on its own. Through every department of the State his mighty spirit ran: from the clerks and the cabin boys to the chiefs in command all seemed inspired beyond their usual powers. It was said that no man went into Mr. Pitt's closet without coming out braver than he went in. King George grew to appreciate Pitt when he realised that he was no mere highflown orator, and that he did not intend to shelve Hanover.

For the first few months Pitt's toils showed few results. Everything had to be reorganised; inefficient commanders blocked the way, and the means of communication were slow. One of his first efforts was to organise a raid on the coast of France; most people disapproved of it, but Pitt was determined. He sent sixteen ships of the line under Hawke and ten battalions under an old General Mordaunt, who had no nerve left. Pitt would have sent a more vigorous commander, but the King, who disliked the whole scheme, insisted upon Mordaunt. The expedition cost thousands, but achieved nothing beyond smashing some fortifications at Rochefort, and the French comment was that the English came to break windows with guineas. The

British nation was nearly as angry with Mordaunt as it had been with Byng, and a court-martial was demanded.

Pitt, undeterred by this failure, sent two more of these surprise raids on France, with much the same results; but the moral effect was great, and before long the very name of "le ministre Pitt" struck awe in Europe.

In December 1757 Sir Richard Lyttelton wrote in great spirits to his brother in America :

As to public matters there is great appearance of harmony amongst the ministers. The Duke of Newcastle disposes of everything in and out of the Treasury; the House of Commons is ready to give to the last shilling; whilst Pitt, whose reputation is higher than ever any man's was in this country, directs the services in which it shall be employed. He would have given us Louisburg and Quebec, or one of them at least, if the General and Admiral would have done their part. . . . So much for America. In Europe he would have given us Rochefort, that is to say the power of prescribing our own terms to the enemy by the destruction of their marine; but our commanders there too chose to call Councils of War to find out pretences for not executing the orders they were sent out upon, and to furnish out matter for boards of general officers, who have cut out matter for one Court Martial at least. . . .

For the detail and circumstances of this melancholy business, and for the particulars of the glorious actions of the immortal King of Prussia (on whom alone we now depend for our existence), and for the preservation of the protestant cause and the libertys of Europe; for the foolish, the base Convention ¹ and all that has

¹ The Convention of Closter-Seven was a treaty agreed upon by Cumberland with the French, at a moment when he was sorely pressed. The terms were very much against British and Hanoverian interests and the treaty was disavowed by King George and soon broken.

been and will be said about it, I refer you to your correspondents in general. . . . Moll West is happy in her fortune; I have built two good rooms at Ealing out of the Jewel Office. Well, Good-night and God bless you.

Dean Lyttelton, at the end of a long letter of the same date, said :

You will wonder I have detained you so long with domestick and trivial occurencys, but the truth is publick affairs wear so bad an aspect that I hate to mention them. . . . Mr. Pitt is in perfect health and notwithstanding the ill success of the War in all places, yet maintains his popularity and is like to stand his ground.

I hear with infinite pleasure how happy your people are under your wise and prudent Government, which I am sure will give you greater satisfaction than if you grew rich with the want of their hearts and affection. . . . I am out of all patience with Haldane's being appointed to the Government of Jamaica while you are left at Carolina, but you must be content with your lot as I am with my humble one till our stars shine brighter.

Meanwhile Lord Lyttelton enlarged disparagingly to Mrs. Montagu on the Government's doings :

. . . What you tell me of Potter's ¹ letter is much of a piece with the rest of their conduct. They have taken great pains to make the rabble *their* sovereign as well as *ours*, and to those sovereigns they must give an account of their measures. If reason will not defend them, oratory must. I hope the first sermon preached by the new Dean of Bristol ² will be a comparison between the lamentations of Jeremiah and the lamentations of Pitt.

¹ Potter wrote a pamphlet in defence of the Rochefort expedition.

² Dr. Ayscough had just been made Dean of Bristol through Pitt's influence.

. . . Bewdley is not yet entirely lost; the rascals are quarrelling among themselves. If the D. of Newcastle had done half as much to secure my interest there as Fox has done to destroy it, the borough would have been mine; but what is a borough worth which cannot be secured without the perpetual aid of a minister, especially to a man in my situation? Perhaps there is nobody whose consideration in life depends less than mine on being able to bring a single member into Parliament at the price of a great deal of sollicitation to those in power, or who ought to be less willing to pay that price. But supposing me ever so willing to pay it, how am I sure of a friend in the Treasury a twelvemonth together?

. . . My son [then aged 13] has lately writt me a letter which I believe is not much inferior to Potter's upon the inglorious return of our fleet. I liked it so well that to encourage the young orator I wrote him an answer of four sides of paper.

Sir Richard wrote again to his youngest brother in March 1758 :

Mr. Pitt has had a severe attack of gout, but is got pretty well again. The Ministry seems well united, the King is in prodigious spirits. They expect every day to sign a Treaty of offensive and defensive with that hero the King of Prussia. The assistance we are to give to him, Hanover Army, etc. included, will not cost above 3 millions this year, and for this, with what we expect from you Americans, we flatter ourselves a peace upon a sound and reasonable footing may be expected. . . .¹

Potter and Conway attack one another in pamphlets upon the Rochefort expedition. I hope there will be no bloodshed. . . .

Pitt had been to the House but once this whole

¹ Under this Treaty England was to pay Prussia £670,000, and agreed neither was to make a separate peace with Austria and France.

winter, but his absence made no difference; as was said, "he made his magnificent plans and left others to find the magnificent means." "Our unanimity is prodigious," wrote Walpole in December 1758. "You would as soon hear No from an old maid as from the House of Commons."

In May 1758 Lord Lyttelton admitted to his brother William that public affairs were beginning to look brighter.

There is certainly great activity and spirit in Government, and it has a great force to act with both by sea and land, so that we have reason to hope some success from the operations we are commencing. The Duke of Marlborough (*quod felix faustumque sit*) is to command the troops in the Isle of Wight; if Mr. Conway was employed under His Grace, I should think nothing would be wanting in that command, but the same reasons that made Mr. Pitt and his faction refuse him in America have also prevailed to exclude him in Europe. . . .

In our domestic affairs the most memorable event was a speech of Mr. Pitt's, in which he attacked with a great deal of contempt the Treasury plan of taxes this year, and even adopted against it a wild idea thrown out by Alderman Beckford, to the great surprise of the House, and embarrassment of the good cities and boroughs of England who had sent so many gold boxes to Legge in conjunction with him, and supposed them brothers in politicks as well as in administration. You will naturally think that after this attack, either Legge must go out or Pitt, but both stay in and the Duke of Newcastle is very easy about it. In truth Pitt meant no more than to vent his ill-humour against Legge in this speech, which he should have kept in for his own sake; but his tongue is ruled by his passions, not by his reason.

He is also engaged in another affair not very prudent for a minister; an attempt to extend the provisions of the Habeas Corpus Act . . . against the opinion

of the twelve judges, Lord Hardwicke and Lord Keeper. . . . He has no lawyer of eminence with him but Mr. Pratt his own Attorney-General; however, he has carried the Bill through the House of Commons, but it will be thrown out in the House of Lords. In the debates he treated the lawyers with as little respect as Fox did on the Marriage Bill, and as you know he treats everybody who dares to differ from him in any opinion. But his chief battery was levelled against my Lord Mansfield, who will never forget or forgive that ill usage. These things will be treasured up against the *day of wrath* which will come sooner or later, according to his success in the war.

Pitt's conduct is all the more strange because I find he does all his business with the King by the Duke of Newcastle, at the same time that he attacked the Treasury scheme in the House of Commons and acts so offensively against Lord Mansfield and with so little management for Lord Hardwicke.

In the debate in the Lords upon this Bill, Walpole says that Temple—

moved a long question, the purport of which was that an affidavit of confinement ought to be a probable cause for the judges to grant the writ. Lord Lyttelton saying that in any other place that question would be a defamatory libel on the judges, Lord Temple started up and said : " This is an impertinence I will not bear." This occasioned much confusion. Lord Lyttelton explained himself handsomely, saying he had applied words to words, not to persons; he was sorry if he had given offence; he had meant less offence to Lord Temple than to anybody; he revered the manes of their former friendship; he hoped the ashes were not extinguished past return. To all this Lord Temple said nothing, and when the House insisted on their giving their word that it should proceed no further, Lord Temple sullenly endeavoured to avoid it by

shifting the asking of pardon on Lord Lyttelton. The latter engaged with frankness to drop it. . . Lord Lyttelton was known to want no spirit; Lord Temple had been miserably deficient.¹

This session another debate took place in the Lords which consoled Lord Lyttelton for the unpleasantness of the former one.

I took the occasion of the late treaty with Prussia to shew the House of Lords the *fearful consistency* of the King's measures in foreign affairs since the first apprehension of an attack upon Hanover in consequence of a war between us and France; which, shewing the *inconsistency* of the opposition then made to these measures, with the support given to them now by our patriot ministers, provoked Lord Temple to a rude but silly answer to me.

Both my speech and my reply were received with greater applause than any that I ever made in my life. The praises given me upon both, not only by all my friends but by people to whom I was a stranger, and by many of other connections, were so high and warm that I can impute them to nothing but a detestation in mankind of Lord Temple's pride, and a conviction of the truth of all I said; I may add too a desire to have that truth spoken.

I told the Duke of Newcastle it was well for him that there was one friend of his who durst defend all his measures, past as well as present, and would not embarrass His Grace by so doing, with his new allies. He smiled at my compliment and I know was not at all displeased in his heart. Lord Hardwicke expressed the highest approbation both of my speech and reply. I kept my temper in both and the decorum that suits the House of Lords. Temple did not, and had no wit to atone for the want of decorum. You will laugh when I tell you that the report to Sir Richard was that his Lordship in his reply had *cut me to pieces*.

¹ Walpole, Mem. Geo. II.

Horace Walpole's comment on this debate was :

Lord Lyttelton spoke well, distinguishing between two parts of administration, and too ridiculously ascribing whatever had been done well to the Duke of Newcastle. Lord Temple answered him with vehement abuse, and applied to him a passage out of Tully which Lord Lyttelton had formerly ascribed on a temple at Stowe—the gentle conclusion of which was to call him ‘*hominem detestabilem imbecillum.*’ Lord Lyttelton as usual replied with firmness but with too little asperity, considering how unrelenting towards him was the nature of that faction.

In such ways they employed themselves, while Pitt swept on unopinioned, splendid and serene. Under his magic sway the fortunes of England gradually changed, and the news of victories began to come in. On April 26, 1758, Sir Richard wrote exultingly to the Governor :

You have one correspondent ¹ that I know writes you at large upon all parliamentary matters and political measures, and I am glad to see by what you say of his popularity that you know how to make proper allowance for strong colouring. The truth is his actions speak for him. What mighty things have been done for this country in every part of the world since he took the conduct of the war upon him; and what a state did he find this country in when he threw himself into the gap and stopt its annihilation; and what still greater things might have been done had a different spirit prevailed and had he had better tools to work with. But this is not a subject for a letter, nor do you seem to want any antidote against a political poison.

¹ Among Governor Lyttelton's papers is a packet labelled with various headings; one is “Mr. Pitt's private letters,” but a line in faded ink has been drawn through it, and there are none of his letters of this time there now.

Here Sir Richard clearly refers to the communications of his elder brothers. For the next two years great news flowed in from all over the world. "Indeed," said Walpole in November 1759, "one is forced to ask every morning what victory there has been for fear of missing one." In December Lord Lyttelton wrote to congratulate his brother on all the glorious happenings of the year; unable, however, to bring himself to allude to Pitt's share in them.

All joy to you, my dear Billy, joy of all the very prosperous events of this year, in which it is hard to say whether we owe more to the fortune of our arms or the valour of our troops. Never was there such a series of happy and glorious events! Guadaloupe conquered just before a reinforcement arrived; our East Indies saved when the Company themselves had despaired of their safety; the Battle of Minden won when the King expected nothing but that the French would be the masters of his Electorate; the King of Prussia on the point of repelling all his enemies and regaining all Saxony, after having been brought by his battle with the Russians to the very brink of destruction; the French and Canadian army beat and Quebec taken by Wolf, when he himself had just writt to the Government in a style so desponding that all hopes of success in that undertaking were given up for this year; Boscawen meeting with and beating La Clue after his squadron had gott through the Straits, and so preventing their junction with the Brest Fleet; and, lastly, Sir Edward Hawke's defeating that fleet by a change of the wind which brought him out of Torbay, where if he had been detained three days longer, Mareschall Confleur would have conveyed an army of 18,000 men into Ireland and Thurot would have probably landed in it with 1500 more.

. . . If the war lasts another year I think the French will turn their whole strength against Hanover and let out their men of war to their merchants for privateers, as they did in Queen Anne's time, to prey

on our trade and make our merchants desirous of peace. Their finances are in the utmost disorder, their credit is destroyed, their Government and even their army full of faction and discord; yet I think they will be able to hold out a twelvemonth. . . . Thank God we have perfect union at home which is both the cause and the consequence of our success; and our credit is as high as can be desired. Yet the eight millions which are to be raised the next year will be a terrible burthen upon us, and it will be hard to find specie to answer so much paper. . . .

P.S.—Dec. 6. . . . I heard this morning from the Duke of Newcastle that he had made his bargain with good and responsible men for eight millions at 4% interest for 21 years, with a bonus of 3% in a lottery ticket. These are reckoned good terms for so enormous a sum and as the price of the Funds is at present; but yet we shall be ruined if we make more such bargains.

This was the note of those who wished in their hearts for the downfall of Pitt. They knew the war must end before he could be got rid of, as none but he could carry it on; and they hoped that the vast expenditure would before long make the country demand peace. There was as yet no sign of this, and 1760 passed almost as gloriously as had 1759. In October that year there is a letter from Newcastle in answer to Lyttelton's congratulations on the success of British arms; the ancient schemer, while he rejoiced, was vigilantly laying his plans.

The entire reduction of Canada, I think, the greatest and most compleat work that has been done, and cannot fail to have the best effects. The French have now lost almost all North America; their marine is now for a time extinguished. . . . They must be weary of the war, and we can not too soon put an end to it whenever that can be done upon safe and reasonable terms. . . . I am now preparing my plan for the

next session, and in order to shew what money will be wanted, I have stated almost to a farthing the whole expense of the present year, and every article of it. It comes to a monstrous sum.”¹

But before the next session the face of affairs was much changed.

¹ In 1760 the supplies voted amounted to £15,503,000; in 1761 to £19,616,000.

CHAPTER XIV

FAMILY LIFE AT HAGLEY

DURING these chequered years, Lyttelton's chief solace was his friendship with Mrs. Montagu, who shared his literary interests, stimulated him to work at them, and, by sound advice, copious flattery and never-failing sympathy gave him confidence when the world seemed cruel. Elizabeth Robinson was an able, ambitious, kind-hearted, cool-headed woman, who, at the age of twenty-one, had married an elderly man whose tastes lay in mathematics and his riches in coal-mines in the north. Mr. Montagu, a very worthy man, was in Parliament, but had no desire to shine there or anywhere, and his wife determined to shine for herself. She had always liked books and society, and by degrees gathered round her a circle, which eventually included most of the brilliant men of letters in England.

Mrs. Montagu had first met George Lyttelton in 1740, before either of them were married, at a birthday assembly at St. James's, where he at once struck her as the ideal of a scholar and a gentleman; his new birthday clothes she described as "rich not gaudy, costly but not exprest in fancy," while she found that as a writer "Mr. Lyttelton has something of an elegance in all his compositions, let the subject be ever so trifling. Happy is the genius that can drink inspiration at every stream, and gather similes with every nosegay." She was probably as near being in love with him as she ever allowed herself to be, for

she scorned the tender passion; but years later she said that she had been in love with a picture of her own fancy, and had never met an original like it in her life. Their friendship seems to have really begun during a visit to Tunbridge Wells in 1750. It was closely maintained till Lyttelton's death, and was the chief solace of his troubled later years.

George Lyttelton's second marriage was not a success. Clever, accomplished, with a lively satirical wit, Lady Lyttelton soon grew bored with the society her husband was happy in, and also, it is to be suspected, with the amiable man himself.¹ Mrs. Montagu, writing from Tunbridge Wells in July 1752, says, "Sir George and Lady Lyttelton went away this morning. As to the lady, she is so unsociable and retired her departure makes no difference in the society. In her manners she signified a dislike and contempt of the company, and in this the world is always just, and pays in kind to the full measure, and even with more than legal interest at 4 per cent."

In another letter to her husband from Tunbridge Wells, undated but probably of the same time, Mrs. Montagu admitted that he would be equally out of his element.

We have a good deal of company here, but I am sorry to say not of the kind that would be most agreeable to you. Here is Sir G. Lyttelton, his brother the Dean, the famous Mr. Garrick, the Bishop of London and some others of the same

¹ Horace Walpole, who was a great ally of Lady Lyttelton's, thus described her husband: "With the figure of a spectre and the gesticulations of a puppet, he talked heroics through his nose, made declamations at a visit, and played cards with scraps of history or sentences of Pindar. . . . Yet he was far from wanting parts, spoke well, when he had studied his speeches, and loved to reward and promote merit in others."



[From an old print.]

HAGLEY HALL.

cast; not so much philosophers as men of reading; but such, or the gay, flippant, and ignorant, must be my society. I am not qualified for the conversation of men of science, nor would it suit my inclination or credit to be much with people of a gay character. I meet with attention and respect from those of another kind.

It was on the contrary from the gay and flippant, if not the ignorant, that Lady Lyttelton met with attention, and in whose company she delighted. She disliked the life at Hagley, though in August 1753 she writes a lively description of it to her brother-in-law William :

MY GOOD SAVAGE,

I grant I owe you two letters but at present I pay nobody. We have not been a day alone, and my time is fully occupied between my engagements with my company and my attendance upon many different sorts of savages, inhabitants of my dominions; my very affectionate and loyal subjects who lay me eggs, bring me gowns, and draw me in my triumphant carr about the said dominions. However your last letter brought two pieces of news so good that its impossible not to thank you for them—your own recovery and Mr. Pitt's. I need not say how much we rejoiced to hear of his having been at Court, a sufficient proof of the amendment of his strength and spirits. Pray make our best compts. to him; we depend upon seeing him at Hagley. I think you are a brute for talking of not coming these three weeks. I suppose Hetty and Miss West don't intend to come at all, they are so silent about it.

Sir George desires I will tell you in these few words, that every thing that should be done at Bewdley has done itself without his interposition, and that they all dine here amicably next Fryday. As to the Shrewsbury party you enquire after, they have had bad luck (I say *they*, for I chose to be out

of it and enjoy Hagley). Four days together their boats were engaged, lodgings secured etc. and every day a deluge of rain. At last they determined to go part of the way if they were drowned. They did go as far as Redstone Ferry, and dined out, were one hour upon the Severn (which was the one fair hour that day), and came home in a storm. To morrow they talk of going as far as Bridge North and attempting the Severn once more, but I think they are threatened with the same fate, for the wind is changed and the sky black.

To day being our wedding day, Sir George (that gallant brother of yours) brought me a paper as soon as I was up, which I copy for you, partly because I think all he writes is worth reading, and partly out of vanity. Can you wonder at me?¹ . . . The French horns call me to drink tea and sillabub at the dairy. Farewell.

Tuesday Evening.—I now come to tell you that we ended our day with dancing. We got seven couple of as smart country dancers as ever you saw in a moment, with the assistance of three young officers of the Admiral's; every body vastly lively and pleased. The Admiral made negus and punch without end and looked as happy as the dancers. Then we all supped together, and the Admiral lodged three young women besides his own three officers. You know he always contrives to assist one on all occasions.

I literally thought to write you but three lines, and I have given you an account of our whole life and conversation. *Pour le present je vous quitte pour un instant.* I have had two letters since I came here from Count Cristiani, *des plus passionnées*, and I am now going to write to him.

Since this was begun Soley has been here to put off the Bewdley dinner occasioned by *their making*

¹ It was a complimentary piece of doggerel addressed to "Eliza" in which Sir George asserts that she has made him,

"—tho' by nature stupid,
As brisk and as alert as Cupid."

Sir George *something* but I don't know what. I believe they mentioned *High Steward*—you'll know whether this is nonsense or not. I had forgot to ask Sir George what I should say to you, and I would not omit naming it tho' in a stuttering way, because this I am clear in, that its good news, for they all agreed it was a strong proof of their attachment and a great thing to be done half a year before an election.

Though her reign at Hagley was short and unsuccessful, Lady Lyttelton achieved one thing for which succeeding generations have had reason to thank her. Soon after his father's death Sir George set about the long-planned scheme of building a new house at Hagley, and asked his friend Sanderson Miller to draw up plans. Miller had already built or decorated several houses in the Gothic style and at first prepared such a one for Hagley. Sir George was inclined to like it, but his wife did not, and insisted upon a house built in the Italian style. "If an Italian house is built at Hagley it is by my Lady," wrote a friend to Sanderson Miller, and fortunately she won the day. She further insisted upon "dark closets and back stairs," and "a small room of separation between the eating-room and the drawing-room, to hinder the ladies from hearing the noise and talk of the men when they are left to their bottle, which must sometimes happen, even at Hagley." So Sir George told Miller, but he wrote later to say that Lady Lyttelton would be satisfied with "a thick partition and double doors" instead of the small room.¹

Poor Miller had a difficult task, for Sir George asked and took the advice of all his friends, and it was not till the summer of 1754 that they began to "digg

¹ *An Eighteenth Century Correspondence.*

the foundations.” Besides Miller, Lyttelton had consulted another amateur architect, Mr. Chute of the Vine, a great friend of Horace Walpole, and when Chute’s plans were rejected in favour of Miller’s, Walpole was very indignant. Some years later, after meeting Lyttelton and Miller at Hagley, armed with the designs of the new house, Walpole wrote to Chute gleefully announcing: “To my comfort I have seen the plan of their hall. It is stolen from Houghton and mangled frightfully, and *both* their eating-room and saloon are to be stucco with pictures.”

Walpole went to Hagley in 1753, and described it in a letter to Richard Bentley. The house he said was “immeasurably bad and old,” but—

You might draw but I can’t describe the enchanting scenes of the park. It is a hill of three miles but broke into all manner of beauty; such lawns, such woods, rills, cascades, and a thickness of verdure quite to the summit of the hill, and commanding such a vale of town and meadows and woods extending quite to the Black Mountains in Wales, that I quite forgot my favourite Thames! Indeed I prefer nothing to Hagley but Mount Edgecumbe. There is extreme taste in the park; the seats are not the best, but there is not one absurdity. There is a ruined castle built by Miller—it has the true rust of the Baron’s wars. Then there is a scene of a small lake with cascades falling down such a Parnassus, with a circular temple on the distant eminence; and there is such a fairy dale with more cascades gushing out of the rocks! And there is a hermitage on the brow of a shady mountain, stealing peeps into the glorious world below! . . . I wore out my eyes with gazing, my feet with climbing, and my tongue with commending. Miller has built a Gothic house in the village for a relation of Sir George;¹ but there

¹ Admiral Smith’s Rockingham Hall.

he is not more than Miller; in his castle he is almost Bentley.¹

As time went on the relations between Sir George and his wife grew more strained, and after the failure of the Tunbridge Wells visit they seem to have agreed to take their pleasures apart; Lady Lyttelton behaved very unamiably to her husband's family, and amused herself with considerable lack of discretion. In the autumn of 1756 Mrs. Montagu wrote to beg that Miss West would send her an account of the "chearful, amiable, and respectable inhabitants of Hagley." Molly West's letter is not forthcoming, but the Dean in December took up his pen to acquaint Governor Lyttelton with the state of the family circle, for which Mrs. Montagu's adjectives were not wholly appropriate.

I told you in my letter from Hagley that a certain lady was doing her business as fast as possible. Her good husband you know had given her a proper check and the kindest advice last spring with regard to her conduct in general and particularly towards George Durant, whom he insisted on her never seeing alone again.

In September, however, when Sir George was away and no one at Hagley but Lady Lyttelton, her sister-in-law Hester, Gilbert West, and Dr. Lyttelton, the young man had come down to visit his father, who was rector of Hagley; and, says the Dean to his brother,

The very first hour after his arrival at the parsonage he came down to the hall and was admitted to a private audience with the lady in her closet, as he was 3 or 4 times afterwards. From the time of his coming to Hagley till Sir George's return in the

¹ Bentley, a friend of Walpole's, was an amateur artist who also dabbled in architecture.

beginning of October, her Ladyship spent the whole day and evening, except meal times, at the parsonage, and at last invited herself to dinner there, leaving Hester, West and myself to take care of ourselves. Nor was this all; for every attention that could be shewn to the greatest guest that ever entered the house was shewed to the parson and his family, and all kinds of neglect to every body else and downright rudeness *to me* on every occasion.

Thus things went on till the good man returned from town, the whole country, the parish, and even the servants at the house clamouring loudly without reserve. As soon as he came home we thought it our duty to acquaint him with all particulars, upon which he at first determined to part with her. Happy had it been for her if he had; but being prevailed upon to see her, when she fell on her knees and humbled herself beyond what I thought her haughty spirit would ever submit to, he consented to let her continue with him, acquitting her indeed of actual guilt, but charging her with every thing short of it. He ordered the young man to be sent immediately away and has assured her good Ladyship that if ever she is guilty again of any indiscretion of this kind, and does not also behave in a very different manner than she has done both to his family, his friends, and his neighbours, he will absolutely part with her.

You may easily imagine this was a thunderstroke to her and must necessarily affect her spirits as well as her health too much to admit of her coming to town against the Birth Day, so she was left at Hagley shut up in her own chamber, ill in body and worse in mind; and by the last post we hear she has been confined to her bed with an eruption of the erysipelas kind, but not in danger of her life, tho' it would be happy for her and all that belong to her if this illness put a period to it.

This affair has now got wind and all the town talk of it; report you may suppose has exaggerated

the circumstances, and 'tis generally said her Ladyship was caught abed with the young man. . . . Her infernal temper has left her so few friends that I don't hear of a single person who speaks in her favour, or that abuses Sir George or his family for the part he has taken. On the contrary his enemys ascribe great merit to him for his behaviour in this delicate business. I thank God he is pure well and his mind pretty much at ease both with regard to his private and publick disappointments. . . .

There could not have been much in common between the gossiping antiquary with his round pink face, chill blue eyes, and button mouth, and the lively lady who enjoyed letters *des plus passionnées* from distinguished foreigners; and she doubtless realised that he watched and chronicled her every movement. Dr. Lyttelton, indeed, left nothing out, down to a broad jest of Charles Townshend's on the subject. Though matters had been patched up, Lady Lyttelton made no attempt to be more pleasant, and in August 1757 the Dean told Governor Lyttelton :

My brother returned from his Welsh expedition the same day I came home, and you will easily believe how welcome he was to Miss West and me, as we had nobody to converse with but the amiable lady of the house, for she does not deign to converse, or hardly say a single word, to either of us. On Saturday Hester arrived, so we are now a strong party and her Ladyship may be as sulky and silent as she pleases.

On November 12, 1757, the Dean wrote again, gently reproachful :

You have no right, my dear William, to expect to hear from me as the *Arundel* brought me no letter from you in answer to those I wrote last winter, nor do you mention me in your letters to my brother

or Hester. However, as I hear ships are going to Carolina under convoy I cannot let slip an opportunity to say a few words to you. I am just arrived in London from Hagley, where I spent three months with very little comfort. . . . Nothing could prevail upon us to spend any time there but compassion and affection for my brother, whom it would be cruel to desert under such a situation. We had very little company the whole summer, whether from accident, or the backwardness people naturally have to come into a family where so much domestick uneasiness prevails, I cannot determine, but I rather fear from the latter cause. Payne and his wife were our chief guests and staid six weeks, but heartily tired long before they were expired. Who could have thought that Hagley should be reduced so low as to court such guests to enjoy its various delights! But so it is and I see no great likelyhood of a change for the better. . . .

Early in 1758 the Dean wrote to Mrs. Montagu from Exeter, asking for news of "a certain lady," but Mrs. Montagu had only heard that she had lately "formed a tender and passionate friendship for a Mrs. Shirley, which she pursues with her usual vehemence." Things did not improve, however, and in September 1758 Dr. Lyttelton wrote dismally to his brother :

We are quite deserted, not a soul here but his Lordship, my Lady, myself and Stillingfleet; nor is anyone expected but an odd man or two for a few days, while the family stay at Hagley. I know not how far the new house (which my brother is resolved to get into the first of August next, finished or unfinished) may prove a temptation to visitants, but I sadly fear, while this worthless woman is mistress of it, few will come that can make any pretence to stay away. I prophecied this would be the case two or three years agoe, and the event proves it.

Besides his matrimonial difficulties, another domestic crisis caused Lord Lyttelton much trouble at this time; it was characteristic that he should be the last person in his family to hear of it. The story is told in two letters; the first is docketed by him, "Copy of my letter to Mrs. Durnford." The brother mentioned is Governor Lyttelton.

Hagley, September 5, 1757.—My good Girl, I am glad you have cleared yourself of the charge brought against you of infidelity to my brother. I will believe you upon your solemn protestation that you have ever been true to him, that he is the real father of your son, and that you have not had a daughter since he went out of England as was affirmed to my sister at Bristol in the most peremptory manner. Your frailty to him is a very pardonable weakness for which the sufferings you have undergone in consequence of it are but too great a punishment; and had you acquainted me with it you would have found me disposed not only to pardon but to assist you. As you say your not having done so was no fault of yours I will reproach you with no further reserve, but beg you to be comforted and keep up your spirits, with an assurance that you shall always preserve my most kind and friendly regards; though the unfortunate scandal about us, arising entirely from your having concealed your amour with my brother, will oblige me not to see you or correspond often with you for fear of increasing these reports.

As for your reputation it shall not be sacrificed, nor my brother's neither, any further than will be necessary for my vindication. It will do you less hurt in your character to have it known that you were mistress to an unmarried man than to have it supposed you were so to me; and therefore where I find that the fact of your having privately lain in at Bristol is not a secret, I must declare by whom you were pregnant; and I am sorry to tell you that the servants here knew so well your intrigue with my

brother that my wife heard the whole truth the last winter, before I heard any suspicion of it myself.

Adieu poor girl, I pity you from my soul and wish you all consolation; nor shall any be wanting that is in my power to give you unless it should appear that you have not told me truth, which I am far from suspecting as I always believed you had a very good heart and were a woman of honour and virtue. Your weakness for my brother will not in my opinion take that character from you if you act honestly and discreetly in other respects. The shock my letter gave you is a pain to my heart, but in my circumstances it was impossible for me on many accounts not to acquaint you with what I had learnt, or to do that in more gentle terms. Without your having given me the assurance I desired of your fidelity to my brother, neither I nor the rest of my family could have known how to act towards your son; but as we are now assured that my brother is his father, I will be a father to him also and shew him and you all possible kindness. You may draw upon me at Christmas next for any money you want besides your annuity. You shall have a new bond for that if you think it will be necessary for your security. God send you better health and comfort you every way. Believe me still, with a kind of paternal affection,

My good girl, your sincere friend,

LYTTTELTON.

With as much severity as he was capable of, Lord Lyttelton wrote to his brother in January 1758:

You did very ill not to acquaint me with your affair with Durnford. My ignorance of it has occasioned many bad consequences to her and to me, and disagreeable ones to you, which would else have been avoided. You know very well that *tenero non sum nimis asper amori*,¹ and therefore might have

¹ "I am not over harsh to tender love."

entrusted such a secret to me without any uneasiness to your own mind. But your keeping her in my house was an offense to my wife which she may justly complain of, and her lying in at Bristol naturally drew an unpleasant suspicion upon me while she remained in my service. Her health has been ruined and I hear that her life is now in great danger. She has a brother who is a parson and who takes the affair in a very high tone. Indeed the money it would have cost you to maintain her out of service was very ill saved, and I had much rather have paid it you out of my own pocket than have been kept so long in ignorance of what in the nature of things must be known to so many other people, but not *truly* known, and therefore too probably charged upon me. Had she quitted my service when she first proved with child, on pretence of ill-health, she might have been kept by you in so secret a manner that the affair would never have made any noise. I now apprehend a great deal will be made, whether she lives or dies.

In the following May Lord Lyttelton told his brother "poor Abden is dead; what further relates to her and your child you will hear from my sister."

The son was given the name of William Augustus Merrick. He went into the Navy, rose to the rank of Captain, and, it is said, eventually settled in Ireland.

Amid the discordance of family life at Hagley one happy event came to allay it. In 1758 Molly West, the cousin who was as a sister to the Lytteltons, at the age of fifty-four married the promising young sailor, Alexander Hood, who was but thirty-one.¹ Lyttelton on August 22 sent Mrs. Montagu an account of the wedding, at which the Dean officiated.

¹ There is an undated letter to the Admiral, from Miss West, in which she begs him to "say everything for me to your young men that can possibly be acceptable from a piece of antiquity." Probably Alec Hood was one of them.

I told you in my last that Miss West was to be married to Captain Hood. Yesterday I had the pleasure to give her away to him at Hagley Church, after which we made a party to Mr. Shenstone's Arcadian farm in very fine weather. The pastoral scene seemed to suit the occasion, and the bride owned to me that the cascades and rills never murmured so sweetly before. . . . We dined and supped with Admiral Smith, who, though tortured still with the gravel, lost all sense of his pain in the joy of his friends. He is the best man in the world to be at a wedding where the bride is not *afraid*, but his mirth is rather too boisterous for a very timid young virgin. All that he said I can't tell you, though you are no virgin, but one thing I will for the sake of the answer. . . .

The Admiral's jest was broad enough and not particularly funny; Mrs. Midwinter, "of whom I think you have heard," made the answer, which was capped by Lord Lyttelton's fourteen-year-old son, with "a line from Ovid which never was better applied," according to his proud father.

Miss West's handsome fortune does not seem to have influenced Hood, as he insisted that it should be settled upon her; otherwise of course, as the law then stood, her fortune would have become his when they married. He was really in love with her, and their continued happiness was a source of sympathetic amusement to their friends. Two years after they married Lord Lyttelton telling Mrs. Montagu that Captain Hood had shortly to leave Hagley, said :

I am afraid his wife will be dull company when he is gone, for I assure you they live together like Celadon and Astræa in the first week of their marriage. He told me yesterday in a rapture that she was a *glorious girl*. Is not this a *glorious* proof of the power of Cupid? If a *girl* of fifty-six be loved at this rate,

think what the charms of forty may do? [Mrs. Montagu was forty.] As for you, Madam, I think you may reasonably expect to be called a glorious girl at seventy-six, as you are twenty times handsomer than Mrs. Hood was in her best days—or rather twenty thousand times, besides other charms far superior to any she could ever boast and which age can't impair.

Before another year had passed Lord Lyttelton made up his mind to separate from his wife; urged on by his family, “for he would have been her dupe for ever,” says Camelford. The Dean wrote to Governor Lyttelton, June 23, 1759 :

A negociation I hear is carrying on for a separation between Lord Lyttelton and his most worthless wife. Had he parted with her when she first broke out into her outrageous misconduct, he would have done so at a very little expence, but I am now told that she is to have £600 per an. alimony, besides her £200 per an. pin money, which, in short, is as much as if her husband was dead and she in possession of her jointure. A man cannot purchase domestic happiness at too dear a rate; but I doubt this, with the other *onera* on his estate, will distress him in his finances.

A month later Lord Lyttelton informed his brother of the separation, adding :

Had I known two years ago all that I know now, I should have parted with her then and been deaf to her entreaties for a reconciliation; but besides her ill conduct before that time, of which I have now received more full information, she has again made herself the talk of the town by writing love letters to Signor Tenduchi [an Italian singer] one of which has been shewn to several people. I have therefore determined to separate from her that my honour may suffer no longer by her shame; but as I could

not obtain a sight of the letter, nor get any body who had seen it to attest the contents of it, and the expressions which have been reported to me are not of an absolutely criminal nature, I am obliged to make it an amicable separation, without assigning any one special cause; but putting it on a general charge of misbehaviour, and an impossibility of my living with her either reputably or in quiet. This being the case, Mr. Conway, as a common friend to us both, has been employed to mediate in this affair; and as Lady Ailesbury¹ thinks her own reputation connected with my wife's to a certain degree, because of the intimacy in which they have lived and still live, his mediation has been very favourable to her.

In short, my dear Billy, I found no way to get rid of her without a quarrel with all her friends, but by making her separation maintenance equal to her jointure. . . . Sir Richard, who has been my principal counsellour, advised me to come into these terms rather than take any violent methods of firing her out of my house without the consent of her friends and relations; and I have the satisfaction to find that Lord Hardwicke and others of my most judicious friends, much approve both of my parting with her and of doing it in a manner so handsome as to stop every mouth that might be inclined to plead in her favour. I need not tell you that the information I have gott of her commerce with Hamilton² and with Durant is such as though I entirely believe I cannot alledge in publick against her. Otherwise I should have acted in a different manner. Perhaps when we are parted her conduct will permit me not only convincing but convicting proofs. Till then I must pay for the folly I committed in trusting to Lady Ailesbury's character of her, and that of some other friends whom you know I consulted about the match.

¹ Lady Ailesbury married secondly Henry Conway.

² George Hamilton, Admiral Smith's sailor friend.

I find that the savings I shall be enabled to make by separating from her will be equal at least to four hundred a year, and though in my present situation I feel the other two hundred a difficulty upon me, it is a difficulty that bears no proportion to the advantage I shall gain by it in honour and quiet. My house will now be agreeable both to me and my friends, which it never could have while she remained in it. Another great consideration which has determined me to part with her is in regard to my daughter. It may soon be necessary for her to live in my house and I found that all her friends and nearest relations on the mother's side were unanimous in thinking it unfitt for her to live with my wife, now that she had again drawn upon her all the talk of the town with so much ridicule.

And so Elizabeth Lady Lyttelton departed from Hagley, to live over thirty years more, drawing the £600 a year, for she gave her husband no further opportunity for divorce; if, indeed, there had ever been grounds for it. Her husband bore her no ill will and after the separation "treated her with every attention," says Camelford, "even to desiring his relations at first to visit her, that a precedent might not be wanting to any of her friends who might wish to keep up an intercourse with her." Lady Lyttelton was not so forbearing. At the coronation of George III, Lord Shelburne tells how he was walking with Lyttelton in the procession of peers, till Lady Lyttelton near by stared her husband out of countenance so effectively that he fled from his place.

Lady Lyttelton enjoyed life very much when with congenial people. In the summer of 1760 she, Lady Ailesbury and Mrs. Shirley were all staying at Chalfont with Walpole's sister, Lady Mary Churchill. They went to spend a day with Gray the poet, who was in the neighbourhood, and Lady Ailesbury told

Walpole afterwards that Gray's only remark during the whole day was, "Yes, my Lady, I believe so." But he seems to have gone to stay with them later, for he wrote from Cambridge in August to say, "I am come to my resting place and find it very necessary, after living for a month in a house with three women that laughed from morning till night, and would allow nothing to the sulkiness of my disposition. Company and cards at home, parties by land and water abroad, and (what they call) *doing something*, that is, racketing from morning till night, are occupations I find that wear out my spirits, especially in a situation where one might sit still and be alone with pleasure."

A specimen of Lady Lyttelton's spritely wit may here be quoted. In 1784 Walpole sent a rhyming letter to inquire how she did, and when he might see her in Portugal Street, where her London house was. Lady Lyttelton replied from the country :

"Remembered, tho' old, by a wit and a beau,
I shall fancy e'er long I'm a Ninon l'Enclos.
I must feel impatient such kindness to meet,
And shall hasten my flight to Portugal Street."

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CHAPTER XV

TOM AND LUCY LYTTTELTON—OPENING THE NEW HOUSE

DURING their childhood Lord Lyttelton saw his children but seldom. The second girl died at about two years old, and his son and surviving daughter lived chiefly with their grandmother in Gloucestershire, where their father paid them fleeting visits. Mrs. Montagu evidently thought these inadequate, at least as regarded his son, for she wrote in 1756 when Tom was twelve: "Your public life will raise a high expectation of your son; it is but just that you should give some of your private hours to qualify him to answer it. His happy genius makes him worthy of such a preceptor."

Tom was born January 30, 1744, and in common with every male scion of a political house, was from his birth "rocked and dandled into a legislator." There is a letter from Sir Thomas thanking Ayscough for congratulations on his grandson's arrival in the world, and his wishes "that I may live to see him a great speaker in Parliament; but notwithstanding the many blessings I thankfully enjoy, I have indeed but little cause to make me hope or to desire to live half so long; and were it otherwise I am far from being sure that I should not be more kind in wishing to see him an honest country gentleman."

Tom was certainly a bright, precocious boy, but there were no limits to what was said of him by his father and his friends. "Every sentence he

utters shews an understanding that is very astonishing," wrote Mrs. Montagu, when Tom was not quite thirteen. "Mr. Torriano and Mr. Stillingfleet¹ came in while he was with me, and the share he took in a very grave conversation surprised them very much."

He first went to school at "Mary-bon,"² whence there is a letter from him to Dean Lyttelton, written in a round boyish hand and dated September 21, 1757 :

DEAR UNCLE . . . I quite envy you Hagley, for it is now in its greatest beauty, as this is the month when the oaks are out in their greatest splendour. Indeed we want shade here sadly, for all the trees within a mile of us are hardly worth a dozen Hagley oaks. However when I go to Eton I shall be better off as there is a fine grove of trees all along the playing fields, which must be vastly pleasant in hot weather.

I am extremely sorry at the late success of the French in the Electorate of Hanover, but I think our hero the Duke has shewn more generalship in so industriously avoiding a battle with numbers so much his superior, than our other hero the King of Prussia has by so rashly coming to action. However, I do not pretend to be a judge in matters of so great importance. . . . I beg you would give my duty to Papa and Mama, and tell my Papa I will write to him if he chuses it and tell him I long

¹ Benjamin Stillingfleet, whose blue stockings are said to have first started that name for learned society.

² Marylebone boarding school was founded in 1703 by Mr. de la Place, and after his death his son-in-law Fountagne carried it on. It stood in high repute. Smith, the biographer of Nollekins, remembered seeing the scholars walking two and two, "some in pea-green, others in sky-blue, or scarlet; many wore gold-laced hats. There were about a hundred scholars at a time. The school house had been old Marylebone Manor."—J. T. Smith, *Life of Nollekins*.

to see him vastly and think it a great while since I had that pleasure.

I am, dear Uncle, your ever dutiful nephew,

THOS. LYTTTELTON.

There is a freedom and assurance about this letter unusual in the intercourse of an eighteenth-century schoolboy and his uncle, and that uncle a Dean. It seems to show that the nephew was already looked upon as a personage of some distinction.

Tom went to Eton in 1758 at the age of fourteen. "His father would not be advised by me to send him a year sooner," wrote the Dean, "but now repents it, for he was kept so backward at Marybon that he will never be able to get into the 6th form at Eton." However, Lord Lyttelton told Mrs. Montagu that the headmaster, Dr. Barnard, "offered to putt him into the Remove, but rather advised him to stay in the fourth form, in order to learn more Greek, which advice he has prudently and chearfully followed." Mrs. Montagu reported in June that "Master Lyttelton is much applauded by the master, has the character of a very good scholar amongst the boys, finds great facility in doing the exercises, and enjoys perfect health"; and after "the Bartholomew-Tide Holidays" the Dean wrote that "Tommy Lyttelton is vastly happy in being an Etonian," and is "ye most improved in person and understanding I ever knew anyone."

In the following year Dr. Lyttelton repeated that the boy was "vastly improved since he went to Eton and on the whole is a very fine youth." His father scarcely saw there was room for improvement. To a friend who praised his daughter he said, "You may be in love with her if you please, but my son is my passion. He is indeed the joy of my heart, which overflows with delight at the praises he receives

from every creature wherever he goes." And he wrote to Governor Lyttelton in 1758: "From Tom I hope all that a parent's heart can desire, if God gives him life and he continues to improve as he has done hitherto." ¹

There is a letter from Tom to Mrs. Montagu written when barely fifteen—a terribly laboured composition, with its borrowed sentiments and tags of flattery, but it is worth quoting as a specimen of a letter that gave satisfaction then, at any rate in this particular schoolboy's circle.

Saturday Jan: 19: 1759. . . . I cannot enough thank my dear Mrs. Montagu for her most agreeable letter. The account she gives of the customs of the ancients and moderns is highly entertaining and her observations concerning them are pleasing as well as instructive. I do not doubt that Mr. Addison would have published her last letter *to a poor school boy* in one of his Spectators without knowing the author, (for then her looks might have prejudiced him in her favour).

. . . Notwithstanding the lavish gifts of our ancestors to the poor at Xmas, I am inclined to believe that the present manner of keeping that festival is more conducive to the good of society; for whereas in those days . . . the gentry . . . neglected the real poor and indigent at all other times . . . unbounded charity is the reigning virtue of the present age. We do not only cherish the industrious by employing so great a number of the common people about our parks and houses, but we willingly bestow all the money we can spare upon miserable wretches who either by age or sickness are hindered from

¹ Dr. Barnard said that when they were both under his care he often compared the abilities of Charles Fox and Thomas Lyttelton, and thought the latter "greatly superior." The Headmaster's opinion must have been formed afterwards, as Fox was five years junior to Lyttelton and could not have been compared with him at Eton.

getting bread by their toil and labour. It must surprise and strike a foreigner to see so many of our noble buildings raised by the private gifts of the nobility and gentry as hospitals for the relief of those, who, without this provision, would die for want of medicines or perish for want of sustenance.

Lord Lyttelton added a postscript, "Tom has writt a sad scrawl, but there is not time for him to write it over again." Of this or a similar letter Mrs. Montagu exclaimed with rapture, "I can see the Muses are already at his elbow when he writes as the Graces are when he speaks. I think he will pay to his family the honour and lustre he receives from it. In saying this I express a very high expectation."

Lucy Lyttelton was born in March 1745, and like her brother was an attractive little dark-eyed mortal. "Little Lucy is a complete beauty in miniature," wrote a friend of the family when she was two and a half years old, "the most sensible and most entertaining child I ever knew. If her beauty increase as it has hitherto done with her years, woe to the young men who live in her reign." Her father writing to someone about his wife, said that "her sweet little girl in beauty, understanding, temper and manners, strongly resembles her"; and another time he tells Mrs. Montagu that he had been charmed with Lucy during her week's stay at Hagley.

"To make her as perfect as I could wish she wants nothing but the society of the Madonna. Her heart is like her brother's and her mind would be capable of all your instructions. I don't say she would attain to the sublime of your genius, but perhaps *that* is more than a woman wants."

But later on the poor little girl suffered by comparison with her father's two ideals among women,

and when she was thirteen he made this frigid comment :

“ She is a good girl and does not want understanding, *mais peu de génie point de grâce*. Her face and figure will, I believe, turn out very well if awkward tricks do not spoil them. Perhaps time may improve her in many respects, but it will never make her a Lucy Fortescue.”

That same year (1758) Mrs. Montagu wrote to the Dean :

I wish I could give you a better account of Miss Lucy Lyttelton's improvement in town. There is a great deal of good in her, but her virtues are in *deshabille*, her understanding totally undressed. She is very opiniative; if she pleases herself she is not very sollicitous whether she pleases others. She talks a great deal, has no bashfulness, and very little sensibility as to praise or blame in trifles. She will never do wrong in essentials, but she does not know how much the amiableness of a woman depends on trivial things. I talked very seriously to her on the consequences of neglecting the ordinary accomplishments of people of her rank, and assured her that her brother had such delicacy of mind he could not have a perfect regard for her if she was not equal, at least, to other young ladies of her acquaintance. She answered all I said with great vivacity, but at the same time with good humour.

“ I would have carried Miss Lucy to take the air every day, but she was afraid of my coach horses. She is all fear and superstition,” added the great lady with severity; but it is likely that poor Lucy dreaded a *tête-à-tête* drive more than any coach horses.

The little girl often stayed in London with her uncle, Lord Fortescue, and his wife; her stepmother was not allowed to have charge of her, and probably had no wish to. “ A certain lady did not attempt to

carry her to any public places," Mrs. Montagu told the Dean in 1756; but other relations took her out. "Lord Lyttelton's ugly girl is gone to the play with the Duchess," genially announced Sir Richard on one occasion. Young Tom also joined in the chorus of criticism, though it is likely that to his sister he told another tale, for they were devoted to each other and had much in common. He tells Mrs. Montagu in January 1759 :

"My sister is very well and is grown plumper—fatter I cannot call it, for now if you compare her with the generality of other girls she will appear but lean. My Papa thinks her manners are more genteel and that she is improved in body and mind. I hope her coming to town will be of great service to her, as I verily believe she will desire to cultivate your acquaintance more than she has ever done."

Lord Lyttelton spent Christmas 1758 at Ebrington with his children, and from there sent greetings to the "Madonna."

"A merry Christmas to you, good Lady, and a happy new year and many of them. Such are the compliments that we country gentlemen make at this season, and they were never made with more hearty goodwill."

He went on to tell her how he had spent the evening before with Tom and Lucy playing at "cross questions," "pictures and mottoes," "what's my thought like?" and other games with which "we folk in the country celebrate Christmas."

I hope you enjoy the gaiety of the season with equal amusement. Your little friend is quite well and loves you as he ought. I sent an account of his sister to Bower, who will I suppose communicate it to you. I assure you, you are become a favourite here for having taken her part when Lady Ailesbury

undervalued her before Lady Norris. She will I believe be again with Lady Fortescue in town, upon a proper explanation between me and my Lord.

Lucy must have granted Mrs. Montagu the friendly reception promised by Tom on her behalf, for in 1759 Mrs. Montagu wrote of her more graciously to the Dean: "I think your niece Miss Lyttelton a good deal improved and hope every day she will be more formed. It is a pitty when much is well anything should be wanting."

In the autumn of 1759 Lord Lyttelton wrote to his youngest brother:

I passed the last summer most agreeably in a tour through the north of England and Scotland as far as Inverary. The weather was the finest I ever saw in my life, and I had as great honours done me by the nobility and the principal cities of Scotland as if I had been a First Minister or the Head of a Faction. But much the greatest pleasure I had in my tour was from the company of my son whom I carried along with me, and from the approbation (I might say admiration) which his figure, behaviour, and parts, drew from all sorts of people wherever we went. Indeed his mother has given him her *don de plaire*, and he joins to an excellent understanding the best of hearts, and more discretion and judgment than ever I observed in any young man except in you.

The tour had been one of unalloyed delight; and both father and son dilated to Mrs. Montagu on the honours they had received. In Edinburgh they dined with the magistrates and corporation, and supped with the Duke of Argyll, "who honoured us with his presence at the dinner, a distinction he has never paid to any other man upon such an occasion." Edinburgh and "all the most consider-

able towns" presented Lord Lyttelton with their freedoms, "and me too on his account," modestly added his son. One can picture the long figure of the excellent peer pacing the moors, and the grey streets of the northern cities, blissfully murmuring "head of a faction," "minister of state," deriving far more satisfaction from the idea than ever he could from the reality, and for the moment amply consoled for the neglect he had sustained in England; while his pride in his son, untinged as yet with anxiety, reached its zenith.

The travellers filled reams with descriptions of the scenery and places they passed through. In sending some of Tom's to Mrs. Montagu, his father adds a complacent postscript: "I hope you will not be displeased with these first essays of your favourite boy in descriptive eloquence." Mrs. Montagu duly found that they reminded her of the landscapes of Claude Lorraine and Salvator Rosa, and said that she meant some time to visit Scotland, but that she did not expect "more pleasure from nature's pencil than I have from his pen."¹ In another letter she said of Tom:

I am very glad to find that he falls with such alacrity into the amusements of the company he is in. . . . Such compliance receives additional merit and is accounted double courtesy where a character of high accomplishments might naturally give a disdain of frivolous amusements. The first business is to raise and ennoble the mind; the next to teach it affability to its inferiors.

After his return to England Lord Lyttelton wrote to Mrs. Montagu:

¹ Some of Tom's effusions are to be found in Climençon's *Mrs. Montagu*.

You guess very truly that I do feel some pain in resigning back my son to the Muses of Eton. I must however tell you for his honour, that he desired and prest me himself that I would return out of the north as soon as I could after the holydays were expired, from an apprehension of losing his rank or reputation at school by too long an absence from it; an extraordinary request at his age, and considering how pleasantly he past his time.

In another letter about Tom during the Scotch tour, his father said rapturously :

Wherever he went he won all hearts, and you may believe mine beat with joy at the sight of his conquests. My only fear is that hereafter he may please the ladies too much. You must instruct him, Madonna, as Minerva did Telemachus, to avoid the dangers of the Calypsos he may meet with in his travels, and let him learn by admiring you that no charms are truly amiable but those that are under the government of wisdom and virtue.

Dean Lyttelton had not spent so enjoyable a summer as his brother and nephew.

“He told me in his last letter,” Mrs. Montagu wrote to Lord Lyttelton on October 4:

that he had been in the finest part of Wales this summer, but the beauty of the scenery hardly made up to him for the want of convenience and good accommodation. The Dean (as a Dean should do) loves the regularities and decencies of life, to sit at good men’s feasts and live where bells shall toll for church, rather than turn Knight errant, visit old castles, and wander in forests. Your Lordship and Mr. Lyttelton have the true spirit for travelling.

The poor Dean’s hopes had lately again been frustrated; on March 21, 1758, Mrs. Montagu had

written to tell him of the death of the Archbishop of Canterbury, adding,

I spoke to your brother last night upon the subject, he told me he had very lately again recommended your interest to Lord Hardwicke in such a manner that he thought his Lordship would be rather dis-obliged than encouraged by a fresh application. I begged Lord Lyttelton to seek a decent opportunity to speak upon this occasion; he promised me he would do whatever he thought could serve you, and his zeal for you is such I cannot doubt it.

Other friends were, ostensibly at least, anxious for his preferment. "Well! There is another Archbishop dead! Will none of their deaths operate to your deanery?" twittered Horace Walpole from Strawberry Hill:

Are you always to serve everybody, and are you never to be served? Must some future Mr. Ward¹ tell how much you promoted every work of learning, and yet how much the learned world lost by your not having greater power of being a patron? It is believed that St. Durham goes to Canterbury and St. Asaph follows him; I don't fancy St. Asaph for you, but considering the ages of London and Winchester can no regulation be made for you when these vacancies shall happen? Why not get a promise? Cure your cough, be promised, and be a bishop—so prays your affectionate Beadsman

THE ABBOT OF STRAWBERRY.

Thomas Secker Bishop of Oxford was made Archbishop; Mr. Francis Godolphin, an antiquarian friend of the Dean, told him that the appointment was—

almost universally approved of, and I hear that he does not intend to live privately a year, as his pre-

¹ Cæsar Ward, the Yorkshire bookseller, friend of Dean Lyttelton and Drake.

decessors have generally done, but goes to Croydon in the summer and to Lambeth in the winter, if the dilapidations can be settled, which I find were settled between the late Archbishop and his predecessor's executors but just before he died, after much alteration.¹

Dean Lyttelton remained where he was, and on May 26, 1759, poured his woes into his youngest brother's sympathetic ear.

Lord H[ardwicke]'s letter, a copy of which you tell me Sir Richard transmitted to you, justly gives me room to hope I shall not live and dye Dean of Exon; but 'tis very unlucky that from that time to this, no vacancy has happened on the Bench, or is likely to happen soon, and every day raises up new competitors and brings the King's life and that of his ministers nearer to an end, considering the advanced age of them all; so that with all these uncertaintys I build no great expectation of a speedy success. My lease tenants also are as unwilling to quit this wicked world as my Lords the Bishops, so I get no money; all I have been able to raise from leases on the decanal estate in *eleven years* being but £235. This is scarce credible but strictly true. . . .

I am advised to try the effects of Malvern waters which of late are grown very famous in all scorbutick and even scrophilous cases, so I propose spending the month of August there and the two following ones with the good Admiral at Rockingham Hall. . . . I am sorry to hear from Hester you have occasion to favour your eyes. I have wrote and read so much by candle light of late years that I begin to find some defect in my sight, and have therefore lately used a new sort of spectacles, called *preservers*,

¹ The late Archbishop, Matthew Hutton, had only held the primacy for a year, and owing to the dilapidation question had never moved into Lambeth at all.

constructed on a different principle from the old sort and made of ground transparent pebbles instead of glass. I now constantly use them when I read small print at night, or any print after ten o'clock in the evening.

In the October following a bishopric fell vacant, and the Dean's kind brother made fresh efforts on his behalf. He applied this time to Lord Chief Justice Mansfield, who replied with a tinge of impatience, gently but firmly pointing out that Lord Lyttelton had not now sufficient influence for "making a bishop."

KENWOOD: *October 12, 1759.*

MY LORD,—I have not seen the D. of N[ewcastle] since I received your letter and have no prospect of seeing him before your Lordship will. I am extremely flattered by the justice you do to my sentiments in believing that I would contribute my utmost endeavours to bring about what you earnestly desire. Nothing could give me greater pleasure, but indeed you overrate my interest; upon such an occasion it would not weigh at all. I do believe your jealousy of being neglected by the D. of N. overthought. I have often heard him speak of you with great affection and esteem. I have no guess who will be the Bishop; I believe the D. of N. has nobody of his own. A Dr. Eure has long been pushed by the Rutland family; I don't know whether he is to succeed.

I am afraid the conjunction is not propitious to your making a bishop; if you was now Chancellor of the Exchequer your interest could not be greater, your brother could not be more deserving, but the claim would go in a different light. . . . I have never been wanting, from the sincere love I bear you, to try to give your brother a lift where I have seen a possible opportunity. I am afraid it is looked upon as a thing that won't do at present, and improper to attempt. . . .

This settled the matter for some time. "I hear from too good an authority that Dr. Eure has the D. of N.'s promise for the next vacant mitre," wrote the Dean to Mrs. Montagu in 1760, "so Warburton's promotion¹ has put me still lower in the list, and three Bishops must dye to give me a chance." "Am I not born under a lucky planet?" he added with doleful satire.

The new house at Hagley was now nearly finished. It had cost a great deal more than its owner had intended, but he sold a piece of land near Birmingham for £20,000 to help to pay for it; his brothers also lent money for its completion, and helped in other ways. The Dean contributed a classical dairy-house for the garden, his favourite resort; while Admiral Smith made a present of a temple copied from that of Theseus at Athens. It was built by "Athenian" Stuart, the architect. Lord Lyttelton tells Mrs. Montagu, "Mr. Stuart is going to embellish one of the hills with a true attick building: a portico of six pillars, which will make a fine object to my house, and command a most beautiful view of the country." It stands on a hill outside the park. In another letter Lyttelton expresses affectionate concern for the Admiral's bad state of health, mingled with fears lest, should he die, the expense of the building would have to be borne by himself.

Early in 1760 Lyttelton wrote to congratulate his youngest brother on being made Governor of Jamaica, then the greatest government, except Ireland, in the British dominions, and his return to England on leave. "I shall therefore have the pleasure of your company at Hagley in the first opening of my new house; and a great joy it is to me that you will be

¹ Warburton was made Bishop of Gloucester.

a partaker in the jollity of that day. My house, my dear Billy, is my own again and consequently yours."

All that summer he spent in seeing to the finishing touches; in August he tells Mrs. Montagu :

I am as busy here with my workmen as I was when Chancellor of the Exchequer, and as much plagued with fools and knaves. . . . Among other disappointments my chairs and tables for my drawing-room are not yet sent, tho' they were promised a month ago. I very much fear that I shall be forced to open my house with one of my principal rooms quite unfurnished. Think, Madam, what a misfortune and disgrace this must be !

Mrs. Montagu was helping with the forwarding of things from London, and received many frantic letters on the subject from both father and son. A few days after his father's lament came one from Tom :

The girandoles are not yet come . . . but we do not quite despair of their coming by the next carrier. It will be a mortification to us not to have them at the opening of this our new palace, and indeed without them we shall find it very difficult to illumine the gallery. I wish you could (fayry like) transport yourself to Hagley on Monday next, and *just* look at us in the midst of all our fracas; but I have too much love for you to wish you to stay with us during our three days of revelling, for I know your sentiments are too delicate to be pleased with a *route* that will make a *hideous roar*; tho' the first day we shall be very decent and quiet as we shall only have the people of fashion that live in our neighbourhood.

Instead of going to Hagley, Mrs. Montagu had been obliged to go to Tunbridge Wells for her health, and bemoaned her fate to Tom :

Why did not the fates invite me to Hagley on the first September, either to dinner, supper, or the ball ?

Ungentle destiny, to send me to Tunbridge and a miserable hop in a miserable room, where the apothecary's apprentice leads the haberdasher's daughter round the room in a minuet, instead of my dear Mr. Lyttelton and my dear Miss Lyttelton leading up the ball! I am rejoiced to hear Lord Lyttelton finds the house finished with the elegance he wished. . . . I will own that my greatest pleasure and pride on this occasion is the reflection how happy you are to owe so much to such a father, and how happy he is to have been able to do so much for such a son; for I think there his joy in having ennobled his family chiefly centres.

The housewarming started on September 1st, 1760, and lasted three days, which Tom told Mrs. Montagu were "three as jolly and as agreeable days as ever I passed."

. . . We were pleased and everybody seemed pleased with us. On such a phenomenon as the opening of a New House, when the whole county was invited, I did not hear that Miss A. was angry because Miss B. sat before her. Female contentions subsided and the genius of good fellowship reigned triumphant.

Charles Townshend gives a very different account of the festivities at Hagley. He had not been there, but wrote to Lord Buckinghamshire :

Lord Lyttelton has just opened Haggley House in the county of Worcester. The invitation was universal to all ranks and all parties, and the plan really magnificent. The county accepted; they all came in, and my Lord at last was the only absent man. Some untoward incidents happened in the execution, for in the first place my Lord forgot to have the beds aired; in the second, he classed the company according to their birth and reputed estates, into three divisions; and in the last place, Mr. Lyttelton, destined to have opened the ball with the first person of the first class, mutinied, and

would dance only with a smart girl he had brought in the morning from a neighbouring village; unknown in her birth, equivocal in her character, and certainly at the very tail of my Lord's third division. Before the dinner was ended everybody was talking of their private affairs and pedigree; Bacchus's hall was turned into the Heralds' office, and the whole company became jealous and sulky. At the end of three days my Lord's new palace was filled with disgust and complaint, and he is said to have confessed at last that distinctions are not prudent.¹

It is to be hoped that this account had grown somewhat in the telling, for Mrs. Montagu told the Dean that she had heard "from many hands of the politeness of my Lord Lyttelton's entertainment at opening his new house. I expect indeed to hear it is haunted by the ghost of King Henry the 2nd who must be disturbed at his Lordship's giving so much of his time to the living."

Dr. Lyttelton was almost more jealous than his brother in doing the honours of the new house. In October 1760 he told Mrs. Montagu :

I flattered myself Bishop Pococke ² fully intended calling at Hagley on his way to Newtowne, and much do I wish he could have seen this charming house while the master of it was at home and all the principal rooms inhabited; but by his dead silence to me and your saying nothing of his intentions on that head, I conclude he has no thoughts of coming. We shall be sorry not to see him here, but he will have the greatest loss. . . . Mr. Palgrave spent two days here last week, and brought us some new Erse poems. His strange figure and awkward silent behaviour did not much recommend him to the inhabitants of Hagley, or do much honour to my nephew's taste in his friendships.

¹ Hist. MSS. at Blickling.

² Richard Pococke, Bishop of Ossory, the traveller.

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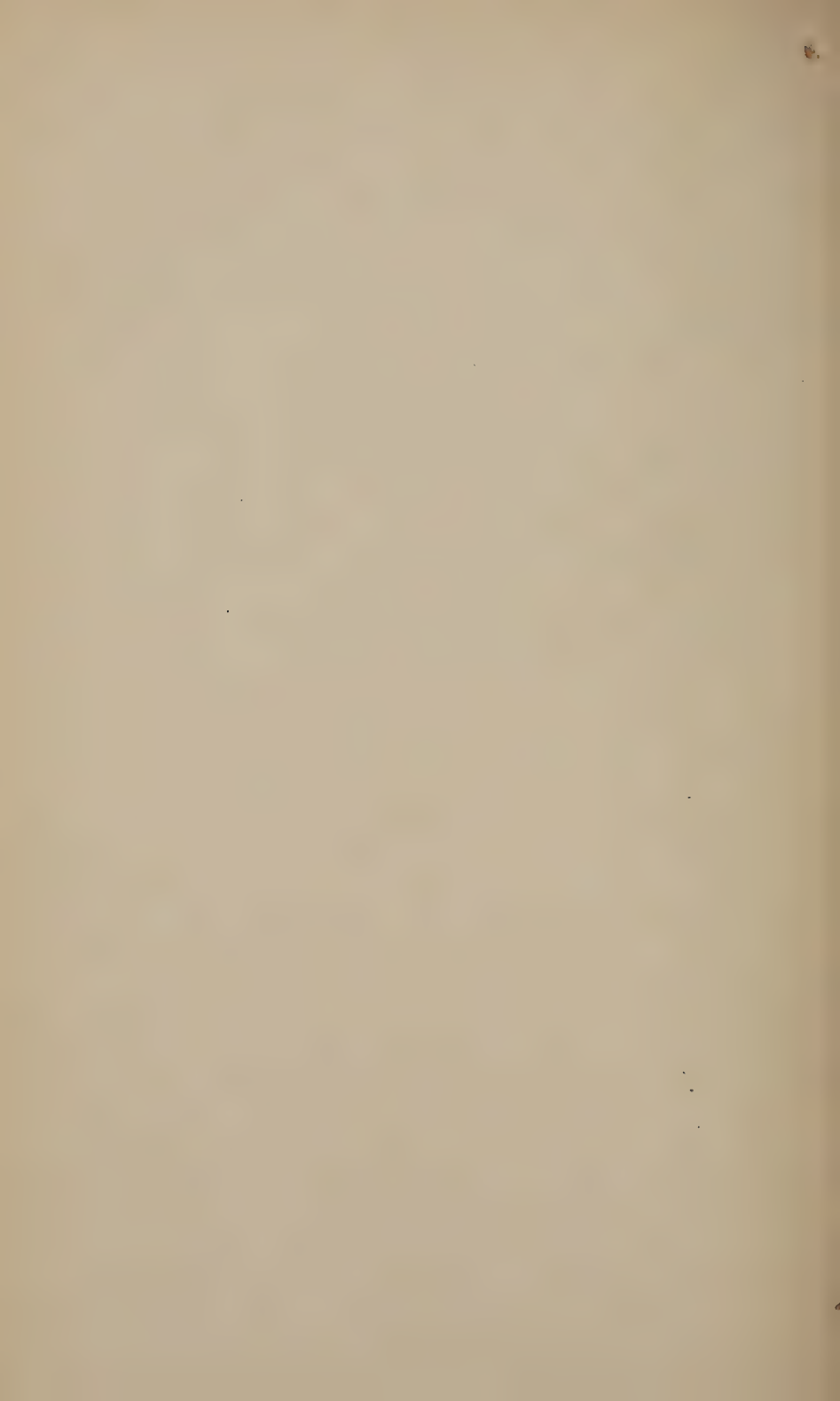
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